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We invite contributions, which should be addressed to the Secretary of the Editorial Committee. MSS should be typewritten, double spaced, and proof-read before being submitted. Notes should be gathered at the end of articles, with appropriate references. No MS will be returned unless accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

Books for review should be sent to The Rev. W. Morrison Kelly, s.t.m., St. Andrew's United Church, 117 Bloor Street East, Toronto, Ontario.

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Thank You to our Friends: An Editorial

OUR first word in this issue must be a word of thanks for the reception that the *Journal* has received. On all sides, by letter and by word of mouth, our readers have expressed pleasure in the *Journal*, both for its format and its contents. We have had helpful criticism also, for which we are very grateful. We only wish we could print some of the observations made, as an indication of how we can be helped. But space forbids.

Now that the first number has indicated in a broad way the range of interests that we intend to cover and the level at which they will be handled, we trust that readers will be stimulated to contribute articles, in order to make the enterprise a co-operative one right across the country. We have already received one such article, which breaks new ground and at the same time takes issue with a writer in our first number. We are gratified at this early indication that the *Journal* is likely to fulfil its task of provoking thought and expression among Canadians. Biblical exposition on a high level will be particularly welcomed.

We desire especially to thank the six hundred and fifty subscribers and Colleges and other generous friends who gave backing to our venture when the *Journal* still lay in the future. We have done our best to justify their trust. Within three weeks after initial publication, we had another hundred subscribers. This response is most encouraging. We hope it will grow rapidly, in order to give the *Journal* a secure existence. There is a large field for us to get into—if only our friends will help us—for now we are supplying in the *Journal* a medium for thoughtful intercourse among all the Churches. May we not claim that all ministers and thoughtful laymen and laywomen ought to know what is being said in these pages? We offer our cordial appreciation to all who are helping us along.

The Revival of Confessionalism: An Editorial

ARE we witnessing in Canada something of a recoil from positive ecumenical endeavour? Is there a resurgence of confessionalism and denominationalism? There is evidence that these things are taking place. It could be argued that as churches we are moving along a plateau, one of many to be expected, in our quest for greater ecumenicity. Yet the image of the pla-

teau scarcely suggests the element of ambiguity in our situation. To be sure, in any spiritual and organic movement progress is inevitably modified by the need for re-evaluation and consolidation on the part of the constituent members, just as much as by the need for more concrete decisions and acts whereby the divinely given and existent unity is manifested. That there is a general response to the need for re-evaluation and consolidation cannot be denied. On the other hand, there are signs of increasing, not to say feverish, anxiety for the success of one's own denomination, for its strengthening and extension, for its exploitation of the present "church boom" in Canada. There is a flavour of opportunism about much denominational endeavour. Unless this aspect of resurgent denominationalism is sufficiently understood, appraised and controlled, the effective re-evaluation and consolidation of the obviously real advances that have been made in the area of ecumenical relations will be seriously endangered.

One of the direct consequences of the ecumenical movement has been the general consciousness of the central and essential place of the Church in the economy of God. We have come to see that the concept of the Church is not only the occasion for a bewildering diversity of opinions and convictions that demand clarification, but also that this concept conditions the whole structure of ecumenical theology. Ecclesiology cannot be treated as an addendum to the corpus of Christian belief, as though it were simply a question of order to be resolved on pragmatic grounds. It is not to be regarded as unfortunate that various denominations have set themselves to the task of exploring more fully and critically their own classical roots in order to recover not only their distinctive ingredients but also that which may provide a more hopeful starting point for fresh ecumenical insight and action. Not a few denominations have found through such exploration elements of the Church which have set aside or forgotten during the history of conflict and self-vindication, and which should be recovered because they are essential to the many-sided fulness of the Church as the Body of Christ in the world.

The revival of liturgical study and reform together with a renewed emphasis on common worship is in large measure an aspect of resurgent confessionalism that should facilitate rather than impede further ecumenical progress. The recovery of Biblical theology and objective preaching is another. The concern for the relationship between faith and culture, including awareness of the "non-theological" factors which activate denominationals is yet another. One must also draw attention to the new insights into the nature of the sacraments and the role of tradition as formative elements in the life and shape of the Church. The revival of confessionalism should do something to challenge the persistent fallacy that strong churchmanship is the death of ecumenical concern and action. A "super-church" is of course no church at all. The road to the "coming great Church" must, among other things, recapitulate in humility and pain, the diverse roads along which

the denominations have travelled. This does not mean that full ecumenicity demands mere conformity to some alleged primitive church archetype from which in varying degrees we have all departed. It should mean that we may be granted by the Holy Spirit a new gift of unity in the future, when together we build the altar of a radical penitence. Confessionalism can mean such a healthy recapitulation. And a confessionalism that is not driven towards penitence must be regarded as a perverse confessionalism.

Yet there is evidence in our midst that the resurgence of confessionalism in our day leaves a great deal to be desired. Much of it appears to arise out of an anxiety to establish our churches solidly in a period of religious boom without sufficient understanding of what we are doing and why persons are responding. This anxiety is often supported by an inordinate pride in and complacency about the sufficient merits of our own denomination. Church extension sometimes bears all the bad marks of a competitive economy. It would be a tragedy if the churches encouraged and tempted by the obvious fascinations of a religious boom were to forget that that unity Christ wills and gives to the Church has nothing to do with the exigencies of the market for religion. It would be tragic indeed if the conscience about our unity in Jesus Christ is silenced in the eclat of expanding possibilities and opportunities for denominational free enterprise.

A rather special illustration of this situation is to be found in many of our universities. There is no doubt that denominational societies are in the ascendency, while the Student Christian Movement, in some quarters, is suffering an eclipse. It cannot be doubted that the S.C.M. negatively perhaps, and positively has helped to draw attention to the centrality of the Church, and is a factor in promoting a rising confessionalism of a healthy character. But it should be a matter of concern that the denominational society may provide insulation against ecumenical encounter and a refuge for the like-minded. Yet one cannot deny that it also serves a most urgent need for definite instruction and pastoral care. The point is that these societies reflecting as they do the concerns of their sponsoring denominations need not be antithetical to the ecumenical movement. They like their parent churches can contribute positively through the provision of resources of the adequate knowledge of their respective Church traditions and positive churchmanship without which no genuine ecumenical encounter can take place. There is need in the Canadian Universities for the S.C.M. with its fine tradition of ecumenical concern and encounter and the denominational societies which should provide along with pastoral care the materials for effective and intelligent ecumenical fellowship. The destruction of one to the advantage of the other must have its sequel in ecumenical regression.

This limited example of the ambiguous character of the revival of confessionalism in Canada, may serve to sharpen the issues. We must be aware of it and take steps against those aspects of it which would drive us from the plateau to the cave.

Ecumenicity on the North American Continent: An Editorial

THE World Council of Churches, organized in 1948, and the world conferences of Christian leaders which led up to its formation, have created among Protestants a consciousness of the larger Church to which they belong, and have made them more eager for fellowship with denominations beyond their own. Those who participate in ecumenical discussions discover very quickly that the problems with which they have been wrestling for years in their own church are almost identical with those being faced by leaders in other churches, and that, in spite of wide differences in tradition, doctrine and ways of worship, each church has much that it can learn from the others. Merely to hear our problems stated in the larger setting helps us to see them in a new perspective and we draw encouragement from the knowledge that others, more competent than we are, have long been at work in the areas that concern us. For any Protestant Church to-day to remain indifferent to what is happening in other churches and to live in isolation would seem to us to be self-defeating.

Yet it must be stated that our Canadian churches during the past century have to a large degree been isolated by a boundary line from other Protestant churches on this continent. Of course there have been Canadians who have crossed the line to become ministers and professors in American churches, but rarely have Canadian churches gone searching in the U.S.A. for men for special tasks, and one has a feeling that any such move might meet with resentment. A Scotsman who comes to Canada by way of the States does not count, for he is reckoned by Canadians to be a Scotsman and not an American even though his sojourn may have lasted thirty years. But more important is the fact that Canadian and American churches have paid very little attention to each other, and in general each has remained quite ignorant of the character, the history, and the theological developments taking place in the other.

There are a number of reasons for this isolation of Canadian churches from sister churches so close at hand. First, of course, has been the strength of the bonds of sentiment that have made us find our closest ties with churches in Britain. The filling of vacant pulpits and professorships from the old land and the yearly procession of graduate students to Edinburgh and Oxford have been the chief agencies in maintaining those bonds. But gradually the churches are realizing that the Atlantic Ocean is a very real impediment to any close fellowship with the churches of Britain, and that, without ceasing to value that traditional relation, it might be well to explore also the possibilities of fellowship with churches on the same continent with us. A second factor in our isolation has been a certain Canadian scorn for "things

American". One would not like to see that replaced by adulation, but only by an openness to whatever shows itself by its nature to be interesting or important. Perhaps there is also an element of fear, fear of being swallowed up, not so much geographically but culturally, by this monster neighbour. Already we are invaded through movies, radio, television and magazines to such a degree that Canadians have difficulty in maintaining any distinctive culture. The Canadian business economy is ever more closely interwoven with the American. Are we to become merely an appendage to the United States, we ask? It would be unfortunate, however, if this fear were allowed to keep us isolated from the American churches and from recognizing that our churches have a cultural, economic and political problem in common with them in which we may be of help to each other.

A professor in one of our Canadian universities raised a storm of protest a few years ago when he stated publicly that the Canadian business economy was steadily drawing away from the British and becoming integrated with the American. There were some people so angry that they wanted him discharged from his position. But the whole tempest died down when a number of prominent business men asserted that the professor was merely stating the facts. Whether we like it or not, we are intimately involved with the United States in all aspects of life on this continent. Bad policies on foreign affairs in the U.S. government endanger our future as well as their own. Educational practices dominated by a humanist philosophy create problems for us in Canadian schools just as they do in American. There is no escape from the problems. No matter how often we remind ourselves that we are an independent nation and a member of the British commonwealth, we have to open our eyes each day upon a scene in which geography has linked us intimately with our American neighbour. That is our situation.

In that situation of involvement, we may react with fear and distaste, and accentuate our Canadian provinciality. Or we may take our place in the fellowship of Protestant churches on this continent in facing and thinking through the issues that concern us all.

There are some who see in a closer relationship with the American churches only a further means of Americanizing Canadian life. They have little faith in the spiritual vitality and integrity of their own church. In all healthy human relations there is a mutual influence unless one party to the relationship is a nonentity. The Canadian churches have a very real contribution to make to the American. It would be a brave, or foolhardy, man who would undertake to say what that contribution is. Its description would come with better grace from others than ourselves. But certainly it would stand in some relation to our greater emphasis upon basic biblical and theological studies in the training of the ministry. It is easier for us to describe the contribution the American churches can make to us: a sharper awareness of the problems of our time, perhaps because they are now in a more exposed world situation and under greater pressures; a greater determination and ingeniousness in seeking solutions; a willingness to experiment even

though it may be costly; an expertness in all matters that have to do with organization, a talent that sometimes results in inflated administration but more often in the thorough and effective implementation of a plan; an insistence upon long-range planning of the Church's work; and last, but not least, an increasing amount of vigorous and highly competent theological scholarship which should be a primary stimulus to theological thought in the Canadian churches.

American churches look with great friendliness toward Canada. They are ready to listen to anything of note that we may have to say to them even though it is critical and touches them at a tender spot. They are only too eager to put Canadians to work. And their scholars are invariably delighted to be invited to speak or lecture in Canada. If we in our Canadian churches could overcome our fears and suspicions and respond with a like openness and readiness to learn, there could be a much more intimate fellowship and constant interchange of life and thought between the churches on opposite sides of the border.

The Transformation of the Idea of the Church in the History of Early Christianity*

RUDOLF BULTMANN

Translated by

S. MacLEAN GILMOUR

I

THE Christian church had its origin in the primitive Christian community; in the fellowship of the disciples and followers of Jesus who, after the stumbling-block of the Cross had been overcome by faith in the resurrection of Jesus, came together to wait until he who had been raised and exalted should shortly return on the clouds of heaven as "Son of man," to institute the judgment and to introduce the time of salvation.

The primitive community understood itself in light of the idea of *Heilsgeschichte*, of history as the path along which Israel, the people of God, had been led in accordance with the divine plan. It thought of itself as *the community of the last days*, as the "little flock" that had been assured that it was God's good pleasure to give it the kingdom (Luke 12:32). As the community of the last days it was the goal of God's saving purpose and the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies. It was *the true Israel*, whose gathering and manifestation Jewish apocalyptists had ardently desired and Jewish prayers implored. This primitive Christian fellowship appropriated the name that heretofore had designated Israel as God's people: *qāhāl* in Hebrew and *ekklēsia* in Greek. Its members were the elect, the saints. The twelve, who gave it leadership and whom its legends promptly read back into the life of Jesus, corresponded to the twelve tribes. They were shortly to sit on twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28 [Luke 22:29 f.]).

The fact that the primitive community knew itself as the true Israel of the last days indicates (1) that *it was unaware of itself as a new religion* over against Judaism and paganism. The temple and the sacrificial cult were not repudiated. The community foregathered in the temple precincts (Acts 2:46), and its members continued to observe the ancient sacrificial ritual (Matt. 5:23 f.). As Mark 13:9 and Matt. 10:17 show, Jewish administration of justice was acknowledged, and the twelve, who gave leadership to the community, were not regarded in any sense as a legal body whose authority might supersede or override that of the Jewish Sanhedrin. As a matter of fact, the twelve were not properly an institution at all; they were a representation of the true Israel. Ideally they were the princes of the twelve tribes, though they had not yet achieved that dignity. Furthermore,

*Dedicated to Fritz Taeger on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday.

the choice at a later date, not much later, but we cannot be too specific, of elders as leaders of the community also did not involve any separation from the Jewish racial and religious group. It only showed that the community constituted itself as a synagogue comparable to others already within Judaism (cf., e.g. Acts 6:9). As these had their elders, so also had the Christian community, to the extent that it assumed the outer form of a synagogue.

The fact that the primitive community knew itself as the community of the last days, however, indicates (2) that its peculiar and essential being was not brought to expression in this form. Its essence, as the essence of an eschatological phenomenon, could not possibly be embodied in ordinances, in institutions, in offices; for by its very nature it was *an entity that belonged to the age to come.* It belonged no longer to *this* world, to the old aeon that already had run its course. It knew itself summoned by the word of Jesus, the word that continued to resound in it as a message imparted by the Spirit. It was the community assembled about this summoning word and, in faith in the word that gave it its being, it detected the powers of the coming age already in effect within it. *The Spirit*, of which the community knew itself possessed, was clearly a gift of the last days. It performed miracles within the fellowship; it brought forth prophets (cf. Acts 11:28; 21:9, 10 ff.); it operated in situations of persecution by imparting the proper answers to those who had been delivered up and brought to trial (Matt. 10:19 f.; cf. Mark 13:11). It worked also in the proclamation of the gospel—whether reproducing, that is, recalling the words that Jesus had spoken; or producing, proclaiming Jesus as the coming Son of man and speaking in his name.

Those who belonged to the community were sealed with the "seal of the living God" (Rev. 7:2 f.; 9:4), which placed them under God's protection that they might be spared the terrors of the last days. Perhaps the phraseology of the Apocalypse is not merely symbolic. If Erich Dinkler is correct in maintaining that the sign of the cross was employed even in Judaism as an eschatological seal (*sphragis*), it is natural to assume that the sealing of Christians took place in realistic fashion, with the sealed marked with the sign of the cross, possibly at the same time as their baptism, which Paul already knew as a seal (2 Cor. 1:22; cf. [at a later date] Eph. 1:13; 4:30).

Naturally the problem is posed at the very outset, how the early Christian community continued to think of itself as an eschatological, otherworldly entity, both in view of the fact that it was compelled by the non-occurrence of the parousia to fashion and consolidate an organization, and especially in the light of its claim to be the true Israel. For the fact that the community knew itself as the true Israel indicates (3) that only those who belonged to Israel would share in the salvation of the last days (Matt. 10:5 f., 23; Mark 7:27; cf. Matt. 15:24). That did not exclude the possibility, foretold by certain prophecies and anticipated by some

Jewish hopes, that Gentiles would also be received into the community. But it did mean that non-Jews, to be admitted into the community of the last days, would have to become Jews, that is to say, would have to assume the obligations of the law and allow themselves to be circumcised.

II

The way in which the disagreement over this issue disturbed the apostolic age is well-known, although the quarrel was not by any means the only theme then under discussion, as F. C. Baur and the Tübingen school once assumed. We do not propose to enter into the details of the controversy. It is necessary only to recall Paul's debate with the apostles at the so-called Apostolic Council (Gal. 2:1-10). The result was that Jewish Christianity *recognized non-Jewish congregations that would be free of the restraints of the law.* The extent to which the primitive community understood Paul's ideas is open to question. However, since his conception of the ecclesia became the dominant one, and since Jewish Christianity, which had extended recognition to gentile Christians but had remained itself within the confines of the law, soon disappeared from the stage of history, we may see in the Pauline understanding of the ecclesia *the first transformation of the idea of the church.* Although it may also have been reached by others as well as by Paul, and independently of him, nevertheless it was he who gave it its most decisive articulation.

The ecclesia now no longer thought of itself as bound to the Jewish people and its ordinances. Above all, it was conscious of freedom from the law, as, for that matter, from all bonds of a human order; from social and national as well as from natural, bonds:

> There is neither Jew nor Greek,
> there is neither slave nor free,
> there is neither male nor female;
> for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
> [Gal. 3:28; cf. I Cor. 12:13, Col. 3:11.]

"Or is God the God of the Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since God is one." (Rom. 3:29 f.) "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and bestows his riches upon all who call upon him." (Rom. 10:12; cf. also I Cor. 7:17-24.)

From the point of view of the primitive community it was inevitable that this should appear to be an appalling transformation, or perhaps, to the extent that it understood Paul, a tremendous, new perception by which the very thing that the eschatological community claimed by its nature to be was radically apprehended; the apprehension, namely, that it was an unworldly, other-worldly entity. To this degree it would be legitimate to say that this first transformation, however much a change it was when viewed from the vantage point of history, was not an intrinsic change at all,

but the radical realization of what had been latent from the beginning. If the other-worldliness of the eschatological community had consisted in the first place only, or essentially, of the confidence that it belonged to a future that was fast becoming the present, it now characterized the community *in statu quo*, a community that was beginning to understand all the relationships of life in the light of the beyond, in Pauline terminology, to view them from the standpoint of the "as though . . . not" (I Cor. 7:29 ff.); a community that thought of this life as the life of strangers and foreigners, to be led in the power of the Spirit, i.e. in the power of the other world, with the Spirit no longer understood primarily as the gift of "speaking with tongues" and of working miracles, but as the power of ethical behaviour. The life of the other world had broken in upon this world of space and time.

The fact that the church separated from Judaism as a racial group and from its law did not mean, however, that it surrendered its eschatological consciousness, its conviction that it stood at the end, and was the goal, of a *Heilsgeschichte*, a course of history God had planned for man's salvation. For Paul, as for his Jewish-Christian predecessors, the ecclesia was the true Israel, the "Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16). The holy book of the Jews, the Old Testament, was taken over from the primitive Christian community as a matter of course, that is, as a matter of course for Paul and for those whose thinking was akin to his, whereas it was rejected by those with gnostic tendencies, or accepted only with a critique such as that employed by Ptolemaeus, the disciple of Valentinus. However, it was the Pauline point of view that prevailed in the church, and that meant that the Christian community remained conscious of its continuity with Israel, naturally not with the history of Israel as the history of a national group, but with the *Heilsgeschichte* that God had wrought in and through the history of the Israelitish people. In this sense Abraham was the father also of the faithful in the pagan world. Above all, the relationship of the Christian community to God was interpreted as the new covenant that had been prophesied by Jeremiah. The church was the people of God, and to it belonged all Israel's predicates of honor.

What all this, especially the appropriation of the Old Testament, meant in other directions, that of ethical indoctrination and ecclesiastical law, for instance, is here left out of account. Its bearing on the idea that the church held of itself is the only subject of our present inquiry. This consisted of the following:

(1) In the self-consciousness of gentile Christians also, Christianity in the first instance was *not a new religion*. Naturally it was also not regarded as the old "religion." The fact is that the Old Testament was not understood in any sense as the document of the religion of Israel, but as the document of the revelation of God, of his ways, his demands, his grace. The Israel with which the gentile Christian knew himself to have solidarity was not the empirical Israelitish-Jewish people, but *that* Israel that always stood, so to speak, only as an ideal above the empirical history of the peo-

ple and was realized only in individual persons such as Abraham or David; *that* Israel that had its reality after all only in the word of God that confronted the empirical people as promise and demand. To this same word of God the Christian community knew itself bound to respond, and therefore the continuity was, so to speak, that of the word of God of the then and the now. Accordingly, by the very fact that it understood itself as the true Israel, the ecclesia was in this sense an other-worldly entity.

(2) The fact that the ecclesia understood itself to be the people of God meant also that it thought of itself as a *unity*. The gospel did not promise individual persons the salvation of their soul and immortalty, as did the mystery cults; it called individuals together to the one congregation of God. In the mystery cults, to be sure, individual persons came together to form congregations, but the individual congregations, although they may have stood, viewed historically, in certain relationships to one another, neither constituted a unity nor were exclusive. As a matter of fact, of course, the Christian congregations also were formed by the convocation of individual persons. However, they did not think of themselves as a visible, empirical corporation, but as a manifestation of the one, invisible congregation of God to which they all had been called. All individual congregations belonged together in the one and the same ecclesia that here and there took visible form. This ecclesia was in being before the individuals who were called into it. By his call the individual was summoned into an order or a sphere that projected invisibly, mysteriously, into the earthly. And such a faith soon led to the speculation that the ecclesia was a pre-existent heavenly entity (Eph. 5:32; II Clem. 14; Herm. ii, 4. 1). Whoever belonged to the ecclesia was loosed from all worldly bonds, and his whole life was encompassed by the might and the blessing of this sphere. Membership in the ecclesia naturally ruled out participation in the rites of other cults, but it also had a profound effect on everyday life and conduct. Whoever belonged to it was translated into a new state of being; freed, so to speak, from all ties with this world and associated as a new creature with the world to come.

When Paul characterized this new Christian being as a being "in Christ," however, he employed a mode of thought and a manner of expression alien to his Jewish-Christian inheritance. When he described the ecclesia as the "body of Christ" and the believer who had become part of it by baptism as then "in Christ," he was using concepts taken over from Gnosticism. Those who thought of God as working out his saving purpose in and through the processes of history thought in the category of time; the Gnostics thought in the category of space. The former could no more speak of a being "in Abraham," their phrase was "sons [or children] of Abraham," than the latter could speak of "sons of Christ," or refer to Christ, like Abraham, as the "father" of the faithful.

Paul appropriated the concept of the "body" of Christ (as well as other gnostic categories) in order to articulate the unity and the other-worldliness of the ecclesia in a way that would be congenial to Hellenistic thinking.

Christ was thereby represented as a cosmic unity; as a gnostic aeon to which all who had been baptized belonged by virtue of the Spirit they had received at baptism, as to a unity that embraced them all: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither male nor female; for you are all *one* in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:27 f.). "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into *one* body." (I Cor. 12:13.) Consequently the ecclesia was a *sacramental community*, filled with other-worldly power, with Spirit, that pervaded it, so to speak, like a fluid.

III

In all this, however, the outlines of a *second transformation* of the idea of the church began to emerge. Instead of regarding itself as the eschatological goal, realized by God's saving purpose in the process of history, it began to think of itself as a sacramental fellowship constituted by the Eucharist and by the sacramental powers of which the Eucharist was the medium. Paul was not conscious of any contradiction; for him the people of God was identical with the body of Christ. The way in which he so to speak neutralized the sacramental concepts with his idea of faith (e.g. Rom. 6) cannot here be discussed, since we are concerned only with the history of the idea of the ecclesia.

The contradiction could remain concealed (1) because both ideas articulated the other-worldliness of the ecclesia: in its essence it was something other than it appeared to be; those who belonged to it were no longer part of this world; (2) because both ideas had in common an orientation to the future, albeit a different one in each instance. Those who thought in terms of God's saving purpose working itself out within the framework of history expected the divine plan to be brought to completion with the (shortly forthcoming) parousia of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the world-judgment that the new aeon would succeed. According to gnostic ways of thinking, the present was the time in which the body of the heavenly redeemer would assemble the divine sparks scattered in men's souls and thereby reach its "fullness." Once these fragments of light had all been absorbed into the body, the earthly world would collapse and return to the chaos of darkness. The individual longed for the release from this world that death would bring, the ascent to the heavenly world of light, and the enjoyment, with no more ado, of immortality and its glory. Accordingly the cosmic eschatology of Gnosticism retreated in practice before the hope of individual immortality. In the church, on the other hand, both individual and universal eschatology persisted side by side, and at least Paul and his school were not aware of their antithesis. It was apparent, however, to Christians with gnosticizing tendencies, who rejected the realistic apocalyptic eschatology together with the ideas of the resurrection of the dead and the last judgment: such Christians as the Corinthians who were attacked in I Cor. 15 and the false teachers of the Pastoral epistles who maintained that "the resurrection is past already" (II Tim. 2:8).

Consequently the church continued to think of itself as an other-worldly entity whose existence in space and time was only a preliminary stage of its being. Here and now the ecclesia was in an alien land: the faithful had their citizenship in heaven (Phil. 3:20); their city was yet to come (Heb. 13:14); they were now on a journey (Heb. 3:7 ff.); and they were bidden to gird up their loins (I Pet. 1:13; Polycarp to *Phil.* 2:1).

But gradually the idea of the church underwent a transformation, for which various factors were responsible: (1) the non-occurrence of the expected parousia, which not only brought disillusionment to the members of the community of believers, but also had the understandable consequence, attested as early as the Pastoral epistles, that they accustomed themselves to the regular course of the world and slipped into an unpretentious, although distinctively Christian, pattern of living; (2) the sheer, practical necessity of developing ordinances and offices, without which a community could not exist, even though it thought of itself fundamentally as an unworldly, other-worldly entity, since for good or ill it was also an empirical-historical one; (3) the immanent effect of the sacramental way of thinking. As a consequence of this last factor interest came to focus more on the salvation of the individual soul than on a universal eschatological future. The immediacy of the other world was no longer, as in Paul's instance, understood dialectically as the actuality of the word, which was to be apprehended by faith; it was construed as the efficacy of the sacramental powers, of which the ecclesiastical institutions were custodians and trustees.

The complex of problems created by the *non-occurrence of the parousia* and the attempts to come to terms with it (so far as the church was aware of it as an issue) will not be discussed in this article. Nor is this the place to give an account of the development that resulted in the *formation of ecclesiastical institutions. That* this took place, is self-evident; *how* it took place, is not really a matter of concern to us in the present connection. The critical question is, whether the organization was regarded as functional, as regulative, or as constitutive. If the church, as a human order, was originally constituted by the word that was proclaimed, and if the apostles, the first vehicles of the word, were not originally officials, then the decisive step was taken when the idea became current that the apostles had installed elders or bishops in the individual congregations as their successors, and that these congregational officials, who only had administrative functions to begin with, also took over the preaching of the word. For therewith tradition and succession, which were essential if the proclamation of the word were to be perpetuated, had been transformed from free and charismatic into institutional occurrences. This had happened in large part as early as the book of Acts and the Pastoral epistles, in which the Spirit was already associated with the office and was believed to be conferred by ordination. It was complete by the time the epistle of First Clement was written; that is, towards the end of the first century.

Something more was added when the bishops became also the official

leaders of the cultus, and it was this development that made the ecclesia fully conscious of itself as a sacramental fellowship. For if the cultus, the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist, served to mediate the spiritual powers of the other world, then the leader of the cultus, spiritually endowed by virtue of his office with the right and the gift of administering the sacraments, was set apart from the laity as a *priest*. Thus there arose the contrast between priests and laymen, which was still unknown to the New Testament. Also the pre- and extra-Christian idea of the sacrifice offered by the priest intruded into the understanding of the Christian cultus, which originally was the representation or manifestation of the eschatological community, a community in which the Spirit had free play. All this predicated a sacred ecclesiastical law in contrast to a profane; the cultic ordinances were ordinances of a holy law. And, because the ecclesia was to embrace the whole life of the believers, what was true of the cultic came to be true of all ordinances of life: they all partook of the sacramental character of the cultic. The fact that individuals were upheld and directed by divine ordinances was their guarantee of salvation. *The church became the institute of salvation.*

IV

The last decisive transformation of the idea of the church was now complete. The sacramental fellowship developed out of the eschatological community and issued finally in the institute of salvation. The consciousness that it was an unworldly, other-worldly entity was not abandoned, but it underwent a peculiar modification. The transcendental character of the church was no longer grounded essentially in its orientation to the future, but in its present possession of institutions that already mediated the powers of the other world and guaranteed the individual his future salvation. The immediacy of salvation had lost its dialectical character.

The church's original self-consciousness was not simply obliterated. It was overlaid and could break through again and again. This created tensions that were characteristic of the history of early Christianity, but these are matters into which we cannot enter here. However, the consequence of the transformation in one specific respect needs still to be characterized.

Naturally the orientation to the future did not simply disappear. To begin with, however, the interest in the individual future of the believer, for whom, for instance, the Eucharist was the "medicine of immortality" (Ign. Eph. 20:2), came to outweigh the interest in the universal eschatology. Then the latter, while by no means abandoned, was robbed in large part of its vitality. The cosmic drama of the end of the world was pushed off into some indefinite future, although at certain times, as in the book of Revelation, the earlier eschatological hope could experience a passionate revival.

But the dialectical relation of the church to the world fell into decay when Christians, as a consequence of the non-occurrence of the parousia, accommodated themselves to a further life in this world and came to think

of the ecclesia as an institute of salvation that guaranteed life after death. Not only the Pastoral epistles and the epistle of I Clement—these especially clearly in their prayers for the state—but also Hermas, with his protest against the development, bear witness to a secularization of the church in the sense that *the Christian faith was thought to be a new religion.* And this involved a conception of the ecclesia as an entity within the framework of world-history, in the terminology of the Gospel of Peter, as the "third race," over against the Jews and the Greeks (i.e. pagans).

The beginnings of this development were articulated even within the New Testament; more specifically, in *Luke's representation of history.* In his Gospel volume he endeavored, in contrast to the other evangelists, to give a historical account of the life of Jesus. In the prologue he declared that he had proceeded as a conscientious historian. Within the narrative itself he not only took pains to sketch a better ordered sequence of events than Mark had given, but also tried, by his datings in 1:5, 2:1-3, and 3:1 f., to give the events narrated a chronological relation to the history of the world. He changed the apocalyptic prediction of the "abomination of desolation" (Mark 13:14-20) into the prophecy of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans (21:20-24).

In his Acts volume he described the history of the primitive community, of the beginnings of the mission, and of Paul's missionary journeys to the time of the apostle's imprisonment. The very fact that he wrote a report about the origin and early history of the church at all, is significant; for the older community, with its predisposition to eschatology, would have had no interest in it. But, above all, the fact that he made the Acts of the Apostles the sequel to the Gospel proves that he no longer understood the original function of the tradition about Jesus as a constituent of the apostolic preaching (the kerygma). He had historicized it. For the eschatological faith of the primitive community, as for that of Paul, the history of the world had come to its end with Christ; as the eschatological community, the church of Christ was the goal and the end of God's plan of salvation. In the thought of the book of Acts, however, this Christian community itself had again a history, beginning with Jesus. A later age naively accepted this notion and understood Christ as the middle and turning-point of history.

Throughout all changes the thought persisted that the church belonged to the other world and, in view of the fact that salvation lay in the future, was a provisional entity, even when at the same time it was understood as a phenomenon with a historical nexus. But the question is, how the relationship of this life and the life to come, of the now and the then, was understood. As a consequence of the non-occurrence of the parousia and of the accommodation of the church to the world, and with the development of ecclesiastical ordinances, the dialectical understanding of the future and the present, of the other world and this world, was shattered and more or less lost. The church does justice to its essential nature only when a dialectical understanding of its true being remains alive within it.

Major Themes in the New Testament Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

GEORGE JOHNSTON

I: The Spirit as Divine Creative Power

"SPIRIT" in the New Testament carries with it all the thought of the supernatural *Ruach* of God that we find in the Old Testament, but it is related now to the person and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus we find in John 3:8 the familiar use of *pneuma* in the sense of *wind*, with overtones of *Spirit*, as in Ezekiel 37. It is a mysterious phenomenon to men, speaking of divine energy and freedom. When Jesus casts out evil spirits, he exhibits in himself the energy of God (Luke 11:20) and a strength that conquers sin and disease (Mark 1:25 f., 40 f.; 2:5 ff.; 3:27–29). It is not surprising that the early Church went even farther and ascribed the actual birth of Jesus to the same divine creative power (Matt. 1:20 ff.; Luke 1:35 ff.), and this surely emphasises a necessary element in our faith, whatever view we may hold of virginal conception.

The freedom of the Spirit means the probability of *miracle*, for the immediate presence of God in gracious power among men can produce remarkable phenomena. The apostolic writers speak of them as "signs and wonders" and consider them the normal accompaniment of evangelism (2 Cor. 12:12). Even conversion is the work of God (1 Cor. 12:3; John 6:37–45) for faith in Christ as the Son of God is made possible by the inward witness of the Spirit. On the other hand, because he is divine like the Logos, the Spirit may find his work fruitless. Perverse sinners, self-righteous men of religion, and even disobedient Christians may quench the Spirit, grieve the Spirit or reject his monitions. For the divine nature is for ever loving and patient, as we learn from the revelation of Christ. We may say, in the words of a young Swiss student, that Paul demythologised the current Old Testament conceptions of the Spirit when he insisted on honour, gentleness and brotherly love as hallmarks of a life directed by the Spirit of God. Nevertheless, the Spirit remains sovereign and is not to be confined to our systems.

The *creativity* of the Spirit that we find in Elihu's words in Job 33:4; 34:12–15, may be linked with other passages like Num. 11:25 f.; Prov. 1:23; Ex. 31:3–6; and the Wisdom of Solomon 7:22 ff. But to what extent is this found also in the New Testament? There is some evidence that Paul and John prefer to think of creation as the work of God mediated through the Logos, the Son who was made flesh in Jesus (1 Cor. 1:30; 8:6; Col. 1:15 ff.; John 1; and cf. Heb. 1:2). But there is enough to suggest that they would find it easy to associate creative activity also with the Spirit,

since the Spirit was present in Jesus (Luke 11:20; Mark 3:29; 13:11; John 4:34; 6:63; 20:22). The new life of the faithful is to include "wisdom" (1 Cor. 2:6 ff.), but this is quite different from the wisdom of the world (1 Cor. 3:18 f.). The "truth" found through the Logos is taught by the Spirit of truth, because it proceeds from the realm of ultimate Reality (John 16:13). On the whole it would be true to say that the New Testament pays little attention to what is called "cultural creativity" and that we must supplement its teaching with that of the Old, if we would try to answer such questions as the following:

Does the creative Spirit of God work through the builders of planned and happy communities, through engineers of electronic marvels, and through peacemakers? May we find evidence of the Spirit outside the Church of Christ, in writers, craftsmen in paint, stone and marble, and in rulers, for example?

One might try to reply by saying that the use of "Spirit" in such a sentence as John 4:24, taken in continuity with the ideas inherited from Judaism, reminds us that the Godhead should be thought of in dynamic terms. Infinite power and majesty belong to him who lords it in love above the stars and suns of space (cf. Rom. 1:20, although Paul seldom impresses us as a man who felt any rapture amidst the beauties of Nature!). As Spirit, God is a pulsating source of infinite liveliness, creating and recreating. In a sense his work is never done. He radiates vitality, joy, wisdom and love.

It would follow that creative artists and thinkers neither live nor operate apart from this transcendent and immanent Creator. If they have penetrated some way into the secrets of the universe, they will know with Einstein[1] that God is subtle but never malicious. If they are moved to perceive the Logos in Christ, they will understand that God is not capricious; holy, but not arbitrary in punishment; supernatural, and yet always involved with his world and his people. Since the fundamental problem of society concerns man's inability to apply creative energy and invention to good ends, the Gospel rightly stresses the redeeming work of the Spirit. The divine Reason is also the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world; and the Spirit of Truth proclaims through the Church the judgement and the succour of infinite love. (See John 16:7–15.)

Moreover, the Johannine teaching, that this creative Spirit is the Paraclete who comes from the Father of Jesus Christ and is therefore united in the Godhead with almighty love, truth and wisdom, affords some consolation to those who are troubled by the distressing accidents and chancy misadventures that accompany the birth of children in human families. For we can plead that he who came in Christ to save is present always to mend and renew. Like Paul we may cry out at the depth of the divine riches and wisdom and knowledge, because God is infinite and beyond comprehension. But with the same apostle we confess "one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus

Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist" (Rom. 11:33, 36 and 1 Cor. 8:6).

II: The Risen Christ and the Paraclete

We may now pass on to think of the intimate relation between Christ and the Spirit, and then to the meaning of the Paraclete as the Spirit of truth.

In his discussion of the resurrection in 1 Cor. 15, Paul asserts that "flesh" "glory" and "body" exist in different forms, so that Christians are not to imagine the natural organism of flesh and blood as identical with that which will be provided by way of a "body" for the life to come. The contrast is illustrated from the Heads who incorporated the old humanity and the new: Adam became a living *psyche*, but Jesus Christ, the last Adam who is from heaven, became a life-giving *pneuma*. This seems to mean that the resurrected Christ became a Spirit and the source of new vital potency; it is his image we are to bear beyond death when we at last inherit the Kingdom of God (1 Cor. 15:45–50).

What precisely does this ascription of "spirit" to Christ involve?

Paul was not indulging in mere rhetoric. He preached a living Lord who is the source of spiritual renewal, the fount of man's acceptance by a holy God as righteous (despite his sins and because of faith in Jesus as Lord), and the bestower of holiness and peace to those who are sacramentally incorporated into him (1 Cor. 1:30; Rom. 6:4, 11). Hence the Christian has a new life which is a walking by the power of the Spirit; the end of it will be life eternal and the transformation of our present humiliation (Col. 3:10; Gal. 5:16, 25; 6:8; Phil. 3:11, 21; 2 Cor. 4:14; 5:1–5, 17). So the apostle can describe this life as a "participation in Spirit" or "communion in the Holy Spirit" (Phil. 2:1; 2 Cor. 13:14). As Deissmann and others have shown, it is immaterial to Paul whether we say that believers are "in Christ" or "in the Spirit" (Rom. 8:1–17 is sufficient evidence); both ideas suggest that we are already caught up into supernatural, divine realities. Spirit is not merely a way to describe the mode of the redeemed life; in act and nature the Spirit is personal, divine in character and effect (Rom. 8:12–27), and therefore the organ of revelation (1 Cor. 2:10–13).

Is it possible, in the light of all that could be adduced to parallel such language in terms of Jesus Christ, that 1 Cor. 15:45 refers to "the Spirit which Christ became by his resurrection"?[2] The answer must be, "Yes". 2 Cor. 3:15–18 would support this view. Paul may well have conceived of the exalted Lord as Spirit, without making an absolute identification with the Holy Spirit of God. It has often been remarked that his very vocabulary demonstrated his effort to distinguish between the risen Lord, whom he had seen in vision, and God in action within the Church's life; yet at the same time he associated the immanent power of deity with the supernatural glory of Jesus Christ. In so doing he prepared the way for the Fourth Evangelist who makes the trinitarian structure much clearer (John 14–16, 20). The Holy Spirit in Paul is the Paraclete in John, and in both

there is the closest possible link with the risen Christ. The Paraclete comes in Christ's name; Christ will send him from the Father (John 14:26; 15:26). Thus, at the moment of the Passion the Paraclete existed already with the heavenly Father, from whom the divine Logos himself had come. But the Paraclete did not enter the world of flesh until the Logos had accomplished his work (cf. John 7:39). In so dating the Paraclete's mission John seems to be controlled by the kerygma of the Christian history. We are to realize that the fruit of Jesus' ministry was the outpouring of spiritual power and the effective inauguration of the "new creation".

III: The Spirit of Truth

The Fourth Gospel further identifies the Paraclete as the "Spirit of truth", where truth stands for eternal Reality. It is also "the Holy Spirit" and as such made its entrance when the risen Christ breathed into his forgiven disciples, recreating them as "spirits" (John 20:22; cf. 14:17, 26). It is at this point (20:22) that we see how closely the evangelist links the risen Jesus and the Paraclete. And "truth" for John must also be related to Jesus Christ in its total significance. It is the Logos or Reason of God made flesh; his words are charged with life-giving force, but he is in himself the way, the truth, the heavenly manna that came down from heaven (John 6:35 ff., 63; 14:6). It is essential for the life eternal that one should "eat the flesh and drink the blood" of this Logos who is the Son of Man, and one may do so by believing in him as the Son of God and by feeding at his sacramental table (the reference to the Lord's Supper lies in the background of John 6:35 ff.; the insistence on the confession of the Incarnation re-appears in 1 John where docetic heretics are in mind). The Paraclete is to testify to Christ and his message (John 16:14), simply because the absolute Truth has been revealed in the person and work of Jesus Christ. As Cullmann says, the work of the Spirit is to help understanding of Jesus' life.[3] So, when the disciples after the crucifixion "remember" that this and that was said or done by the Master, we are to see the teaching Spirit illuminating their hearts and minds (cf. 2:17; 12:16). By his office the prayer of the Lord is answered, that his followers may be "consecrated in the truth", for consecration is produced by the Spirit of holiness and truth (John 17:17–19; cf. 1 Thess. 4:1–8).

There are implications in the fact that this work of the Spirit in helping the disciples to remember is linked to the O.T. Scripture. We may add also Luke 24:27 and John 5:39–47. The study of Scripture in our time is "scientific" in the sense that we desire to discover authentic words of and facts about Jesus Christ. But we learn from these passages that the Scripture is opened up to the understanding by the teaching Paraclete. The theologian may not, therefore, speculate on the truth apart from the recorded revelation of God *in Christ*; neither may the Biblical critic be allowed to rest content with textual or exegetical findings: for he too is called to grasp the theological truth that in Christ *God* is present, to reveal

and to save. But none of this goes on outside the beloved community in which the scholar lives and in which the Holy Spirit abides.

IV: Spiritual Life as Eschatological Fulfilment

The Christian faith asserts that in the man of Nazareth Jewish dreams and hopes came true. At the same time they are upset. For a Messiah who was not a new David or a greater Moses or a supreme High Priest, but rather a Servant who offered himself as a living sacrifice, is not at all what the Jews, as the People of God, expected; and a Kingdom that involves the rejection of Israel's "after the flesh" in favour of an Ecclesia of "Christian" Jews and Gentiles is one out of which the non-Christian Jew must contract. To that extent it is right to agree with von Dobschütz, that Jewish eschatology has been transmuted, or with Dodd and Jeremias that it is in process of being realised after a paradoxical manner. The fact remains that the Last Things are still Last; they are not yet here. Principalities of evil seem still to reign. Schism is within the Church, and not that alone: it is the scene of power-politics, fear, bitterness, self-love and other spiritual "weeds". We are left with the necessity of constructing a different eschatology than the Jewish, because the situation is radically different.

To do this it is not enough to think of Christ as a transient who may one day return (at an unknown hour, Mark 13:32; 1 Thess. 5:2). The risen Christ is an eternal presence who lives in the faithful (Gal. 2:20). Believers here and now enjoy "fellowship with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3). The future reference is contained in such passages as Rom. 6:5; 8:11: those who died sacramentally in Baptism will "certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his". He is the corporate Adam in whom God's redeemed people will find their eternal glory and joy. But in so far as Adam now lives, all his people live; and the proof of this is that they have received the Spirit (Rom. 8:2, 6, 9–10). Already they are the children of God and therefore joint-heirs with Christ of the glory yet to come (Rom. 8:14–18; Gal. 3:26–29). Paul and John show us that the new life of sonship, even in the flesh, is spiritual: God "has put his seal on us and given us his Spirit as an earnest" (2 Cor. 1:22; cf. 5:5; Rom. 8:23); the friends of Jesus are branches in the Vine of God, they have been reborn from above by water and the Spirit, and thus they have blessed communion with the Father (John 1:12; 3:5; 14:21; 15:5 ff.). For this reason the new age of the Spirit, the era of the New Covenant, is quite different from that of Moses and the Law (John 1:17; Rom. 8:1–4; Heb. 6:4; 8:13). It would appear that Isaiah's prophecy is being fulfilled: "For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit on your descendants, and my blessing on your offspring" (44:3; cf. Ezek. 36:25 ff.). John makes much of the analogy between water and the Spirit (especially 4:14 and 7:37–39). However partial and incomplete, however ambiguous in this evil world may be the life of the Church it is "real" life; it proceeds from the eternal and invisible

world where God reigns; and the Spirit within the faithful is their assurance that the End cannot mean anything other than an enlargement of what they already possess (John 5:24–29; 6:40; 11:25). Thus the spiritual life of the Christian is eschatological fulfilment, in part at least.

This theme can be elaborated in terms of the "bread" of life as well as the "water", and it too is linked to the work of the Spirit (John 6:63; cf. 1 Cor. 10:16; 11:29; 12:12 f., 27 where Paul develops his idea of the Body of Christ and its sacramental rite at the Supper).

The situation is, then, that in the Church on earth communicants are in partial enjoyment of the divine life. Christ is close to them, and the Paraclete is active among them. Their duty is to observe the commandments of love and to serve one another as Jesus served his disciples on the night of betrayal (John 15:10–12 and 13:1–11). Without knowing when or how the Father will complete his saving work at "the last day", Christians are to declare his love and his redemptive purpose, not in their own wisdom but by the power of the Spirit. They are themselves not so much dying men as men stamped with an unearthly destiny. If their faith is always under strain and their vision fleeting, if there is constant tension and tribulation in this age (1 Peter 2:21; 4:12 ff.), they are to remember that the pattern of the Cross is the strange sign of what true life is, even in heaven: service, sacrifice, and love; and that the powers of the Age to Come operate now in those who have been consecrated by the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:2; Heb. 6:5). "You have been born anew, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for

> All flesh is like grass
> and all its glory like the flower of grass.
> The grass withers, and the flower falls,
> but the word of the Lord abides forever.

That word is the good news which was preached to you" (1 Pet. 1:23–25, R.S.V.).

Hence, although the mature thought of the New Testament still looks forward in time to the Parousia at the End, the situation is very different from that of the Old Testament or normative Judaism: the latter awaits a Messiah who has not come; the former awaits a divine Saviour who has already come to be the Messiah of the Jews, but who is known to the believers of every land and kindred and tongue as One who is far greater than Messiah. The Christ who is expected to act as Judge and King at the consummation of the ages is the Son who was eternally the Logos in the bosom of the Father and the Son of Man who has entered into heaven after his passion and sacrifice. Again, the Jews looked forward, having Moses and the prophets; whereas the Christians look forward, having among them, in their hearts as individuals and in their Society as the Body of Christ, the divine Spirit, the teaching Paraclete, who defends them,

pleads for them, loves them. Paul may speak of the tribunal of Christ before which we must all appear (2 Cor. 5:10); John speaks of a judgement that has already taken place for the faithful (3:18 f.). Paul may say that "the Lord is at hand" (Phil. 4:5) and the author of 1 Peter that "the End of all things is at hand" (4:7); yet the New Testament ends with the longing that the Lord Jesus will come soon, as the seer hoped (Rev. 22:20). And that End is still not in sight. We must rest content with a hope that is guaranteed by the power of the Spirit that is transforming human life here and now, so that faithful and loving people are becoming Christlike; but we need not give up the conviction that in some sense there must be an End, a Goal, when God will complete his purpose in the creation, when he will recapitulate all things into Christ (Eph. 1:10). Meantime we are assured by Paul that our life is a movement from glory to glory and is hid with Christ in God (2 Cor. 3:18; Col. 3:3). In this life the power of the Spirit works to bless us, who must glorify God that he is content to share his eternal being with his People.

NOTES: This paper was first read at a meeting of *Duodecim*, a theological society, in New York, November 1954.

1. See *The Drama of Albert Einstein* by Antonina Vallentin, pp. 300 ff.
2. G. Vos, "The Eschatological Aspect of the Pauline Conception of the Spirit" in *Biblical and Theological Studies* by Princeton Seminary Faculty (1912), pp. 233 ff.
3. O. Cullmann, *Les Sacrements dans l'Evangile Johannique*, p. 17.

The Atonement and Mythology

JAMES S. THOMSON

PROFESSOR RUDOLPH BULTMANN, in his essay on *New Testament and Mythology*, raises the fundamental question of how we are to present the saving work of Christ to the modern mind. This problem is involved in his discussion of the larger subject of how far the thought and language of the New Testament can be understood by men and women in this twentieth century. Bultmann's essay has projected a vigorous debate among his German contemporaries and is now attracting much attention in the English-speaking world. The relevant documents are available in an English translation, published under the title *Kerygma and Myth*,[1] containing the original essay, followed by a series of critical articles from German scholars, with two replies by Bultmann himself and concluding with an English appreciation by Austin Farrer.

It is not intended here to discuss at any length the whole large question raised by Professor Bultmann concerning our attitude to the mythological elements in the New Testament but rather to concentrate attention on what he himself regards as the all important problem—what is the message of the Cross? How shall it be heard in our time? Bultmann insists that along with the Word of the Cross we must also proclaim the Word of the Resurrection—and with this position there can hardly be anything but the fullest agreement; although we should note that these two events (the death of Christ and His Resurrection) are not to be regarded as historical in the same sense—but of this more later. Nor can there be two minds about the radical character of the discussion. This is no question of detached scholarly interest. It is concerned with the very nature of the Gospel, in which the preacher is at least as much involved as the theologian. Bultmann himself realizes its practical importance, and however we may judge the adequacy of the treatment, his evangelical purpose ought to be fully recognized.

I

Professor Bultmann's thesis is that the essential message of the New Testament is so involved with an outmoded mythology that it can be neither understood nor accepted by contemporary men and women. Consequently, there is an urgent need to disentangle the Gospel from its cosmological setting, so that its real truth may be declared. However, the aim is not one of facile accommodation to modernity in the hope that the Word of God can be reduced to more acceptable terms. The scandal of the Gospel remains, particularly the offence of the Cross, which persists in being as foolish to the worldly minded as it has always been. But we need not obscure the summons of the Christian message to decision by

retaining the mythological furniture, which places an unnecessary burden on faith and has the effect of distracting attention from the real challenge of the Cross. This process of liberating the vital Word from its New Testament framework, is described by Bultmann as *Entmythologisierung*, a cumbersome German word that has no exact English equivalent. The translation, now largely accepted, is *Demythologizing*, which is probably as near an English equivalent as we are likely to get, although it hardly represents what Bultmann has in mind. His purpose is positive rather than negative. Mythology cannot be expunged from the New Testament, but we can attempt to grasp its real meaning.

In his radical treatment of the Christian message of salvation, Professor Bultmann proceeds beyond the New Testament to maintain that the traditional doctrines of the Church must be subjected to the same criticism. The very idea of Atonement is regarded as mythological.[2] Thus as Professor H. Sasse is quoted as saying in the Foreword to the English publication, "We have a proposal not only to demythologize the New Testament, but also to dedogmatize the Christian faith."[3] Bultmann contends that the conception of expiation by death involves a most superstitious idea of God. "What a primitive mythology it is that a divine Being should become incarnate, and atone for the sins of men through his own blood!"[4] According to Bultmann, the traditional doctrine of the Atonement has been governed by judicial categories, borrowed from the law-courts. Such an interpretation fails to recognize the real nature of sin and is entirely unworthy of God, who is thus represented as a Judge demanding satisfaction for a penal offence. The Atonement becomes a transaction, externally achieved, without getting at the heart of guilt and forgiveness.[5] It is evident that Bultmann has in mind the Anselmic interpretation of Christ's work, which, along with the recently revived Ransom theory, may be regarded as the classical statement of the doctrine of Atonement in Christian theology. Bultmann is equally clear that the idea of a Ransom from the Devil is unacceptable. Who, he asks, really believes to-day in the power of demons?[6]

The real difficulty, according to Professor Bultmann, is that the Gospel as it comes to us in the original Kerygma of New Testament, and as it has been doctrinally elaborated in subsequent theology, is involved with an account of God and the world that is mythological rather than scientific. Modern man simply cannot accept this outworn cosmology, and consequently he rejects the Gospel that still has the power to speak from within it. The Evangel must be liberated from its imprisonment. The Biblical mythology presents God as a localized deity somewhere above the earth in the heavens. He creates the world by a direct act, but the scene of earth becomes infested by demonic powers of evil. The heavenly Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, becomes incarnate in a man Jesus, Who dies to atone for the sins of the world, only to be raised up after having descended into Hell. Now He has ascended to sit at God's right hand awaiting the end of time, when He shall return in power and glory.

Is this intelligible to the modern mind? Bultmann contends most emphatically that it is not, and there is no reason why it should be. In fact, even if it could be accepted, it would be irrelevant, "because there is nothing specifically Christian in the mythical view of the world as such. It is simply the cosmology of a pre-scientific age."[7] How, in effect, asks Bultmann, can a mythological account of world-history save any man's soul? How can an event in history be the means of forgiveness for sins nineteen centuries later? We are not redeemed by either cosmology or history.

II

Professor Bultmann does not propose to resolve his problem by eliminating unacceptable elements from the New Testament. This was the objective of the so-called liberal scholars whose methods received their final criticism at the hands of Albert Schweitzer. There can be no expurgation of the New Testament, which must be accepted as it has come to us—myths and all. This is the only truly scientific method of dealing with historical documents. We must not attempt to reach so-called actual facts supposed to lie beneath superimposed layers of pious and mythological interpretation, not only because this is an impossible task, but because even if it could be achieved, the results would be irrelevant. Our concern is not with historical details. The mythological interpretation is really the vital element in the documents, but only if it is properly understood.

According to Bultmann "the real purpose of myth is not to present an objective picture of the world as it is, but to express man's understanding of himself in the world in which he lives. Myth should be interpreted not cosmologically, but anthropologically, or better still, existentially."[8] Thus, we must not think of myth as a pre-scientific way of thinking about the nature of the universe, but now rendered obsolete by methods of empirical investigation. Myth is essentially religious rather than philosophical in its nature; it is an imaginative account of man's own personal life as he is confronted by what is other than himself, but to which he must submit and to which he must become reconciled. It speaks of his sense of dependence on powers beyond his control, of a supersensible world, expressed not in conceptual ideas, but in the form of a story. The origin of myth is thus to be found within man himself. Although Bultmann does not use the actual word or even refer to the process, he appears to interpret myth-making as what contemporary psychologists describe by "projection". Man projects upon the world an imaginative version depicting his interior self-awareness of conflict as he senses his inability to manage his own life. But he attains security and meaning for existence by externalizing his faith into imaginative objectivity, as a myth of Divine origin and cosmic process.

Professor Bultmann contends that this understanding of myth points the way to the interpretation of the New Testament for the modern mind. As cosmology, the myths of the Bible impose an intolerable strain on scientific thought: as anthropology, they are as true as when they were

first written. They arise out of a felt need for security and reconciliation. Man has always been in search of his real existence, for what he really is. Hence the significant word for Bultmann is "existential", expressing, as it does, man's sense of involvement in life as a demand in which he feels himself frustrated and defeated, a guilty sinner in need of forgiveness and newness of life. His life is pervaded by a sense of nothingness—it is devoid of meaning and significance. It runs on to "dusty death". The original power of the Gospel lay in its address to this very condition as a message of new life. But in the New Testament the saving event of the death of Christ comes to us in a setting of Jewish apocalyptic and Gnostic myths of redemption, whereas the real efficacy of the Cross and Resurrection lies in an inward experience, whereby they become redemptive acts of God in our present lives.

According to Professor Bultmann, the contemporary existential philosophy is giving us the same account of the human predicament as the New Testament. What the scriptures state in terms of myth, the new philosophy expresses as man's awareness of his own existence. In both, the mode of thinking is "existential," i.e. not abstract, detached or neutral. In neither is it scientific in the sense that man makes an objective appraisal of facts as a prelude to formulating a theory about himself. Rather this approach to the nature of existence recognises commitment and the demand of life for decision, albeit an enforced decision. Man cannot cease to exist, and therefore an attitude towards life is not a matter of avoidable choice; and the real account of Being is not a theoretical system of metaphysics, but the way in which he actually exists. Bultmann places particular reliance on the work of Martin Heidegger as his guide into this new and somewhat unfamiliar philosophical pathway. And certainly Heidegger is the ablest and most thoroughgoing of its exponents, although by no means the easiest to follow. He raises the ancient question of philosophy concerning the nature of Being not as a general abstract problem for metaphysical discussion, but as one that confronts the human individual in the enforced assignment of his own personal existence. He gives a novel turn to the expression "existential" as descriptive of man's unique nature. Man "ex-sists" i.e. he stands out from himself in self-awareness of his own existence.[9] He can never get away from himself—he has "Da-sein"—he is always there.[10] This gives to human life a sense of anxious concern.[11] We did not ask to exist—we are simply "thrown" into a stream of events at a point and under conditions we did not choose.[12] But we cannot disavow responsibility for our lives without ceasing to exist and this is not a live option. We are therefore involved in a movement of events that lie beyond us, and to that extent life defeats us and we have a sense of existence as not being what it ought to be. This for Heidegger is the experience of "fallenness"—we fall beneath real existence.[13] Above all, we, each of us, have a real experience of the "nothingness" of life, not in some general philosophy of nihilism, but in the fact that all of us shall cease to exist. For life runs on to death; existence runs on to non-existence.[14] What, then, is the mean-

ing of my existence?—nothing at all? It is in these searching terms that Heidegger raises the age-long problems of Being and Non-Being—not as questions for abstract discussion—but as involved in the very nature of human existence.

Professor Bultmann declares that this "existentialist analysis of the ontological structure of being would seem to be no more than a secularized, philosophical version of the New Testament view of human life." To the objection that he is reading back into the New Testament subjective interpretations borrowed from some other source, the rejoinder is that his critics are not really facing the fact that "the philosophers are saying the same thing as the New Testament and saying it quite independently."[15] Here then is Bultmann's position: the existentialist analysis of human life is the latest version of a *philosophia perennis*, which reveals an account man at the deepest level of his being has always given of his own existence, that he is compelled to live in two worlds, in neither of which can he fully accept himself. Consequently his life is beset with anxiety, guilt and a feeling of insignificance. Ancient myth, New Testament cosmology and contemporary philosophy all unite in bearing witness to man's divided existence and reveal his need for a fundamental reconciliation or atonement. If it is said that every man we meet in the street to-day, the modern technological man, is not an existentialist thinker, and is not perpetually engaged in asking troubled questions about the nature of his own existence, Bultmann agrees. However, man to-day is unhappy, frustrated and nowhere accepts life as it is. He is rebellious, even if the sources of his disturbance are unconscious rather than brought into the light of understanding. The existentialist philosophy may be said to fulfil the contemporary role of the Bible by acting as a mirror for the soul.

III

Shall we then close the New Testament and turn to the less interesting and certainly much less intelligible pages of *Sein und Zeit*? That is hardly Bultmann's proposal. What need then of the New Testament at all, if existentialist teaching says the same thing and declares it more relevantly to the modern mind? The answer is that in the Scriptures we have a saving event addressed to faith—the event of Jesus Christ. There is no gospel in existentialism, only the need for a gospel. The question therefore is how can the saving act of God which occurred in history through Jesus Christ become mighty to save, for us to-day. Not, declares Bultmann, if we regard it as an event in history and nothing more. It was not so interpreted in the New Testament: consequently in the Scriptures we have both the historical Jesus and the mythological Christ. To use a somewhat ambiguous expression, which nevertheless appears unavoidable in contemporary theology, the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus are eschatological events—their true meaning lies beyond history and they are addressed to faith. Only thus can they be apprehended as acts of God. But, according to Bultmann, the mythological account in the New Testament is no longer acceptable:

on the other hand, we cannot dispense with it in the interests of getting at the real Jesus, because, even if we could reach such an understanding, it would have no saving virtue. Our task therefore is to interpret aright the Christology of the New Testament and this can only be done if we can understand what it really means. For Bultmann, Christ is the Word of God, mediated to us through a real historical person, who truly lived and died on the cross. However, His saving power lies not in His historical existence, but in His address to us now, when we accept Him by faith as our only real existence. This is not an act of intellectual assent, but an identification of ourselves with Him so that we are crucified with Christ, and are thus enabled to die to the world. And the Resurrection is no longer a dubious historical event, but an inward experience of being raised into newness of life. Only thus can we realise the forgiveness of sins through the Cross and Resurrection of Christ. The Cross "is not just an event of the past which can be contemplated in detachment, but an eschatological event in and beyond time, for as far as its meaning—that is, its meaning for faith—is concerned, it is an ever-present reality."[16]

Professor Bultmann's interpretation of the Cross is a restatement of what is generally known as the subjective theory of the Atonement. He is avowedly critical of historical and theological objectivity in the sense that the Cross is a mighty act of God whereby our redemption is accomplished through the obedient sacrifice of Christ. His account of the Cross virtually eliminates all the traditional interpretations which have their source in the New Testament and have found expression in the doctrine of the Church whereby Christ is our representative before God, bearing our sins, and giving His life as a ransom. All of this Bultmann assigns to the realm of out-dated mythology.[17] True, he proposes to retain eschatology in the sense that the death of Christ, simply as an event in history, is not in itself the Divine act of salvation, but with this position theology has never disagreed. The real question which Bultmann studiously avoids is: Why did Jesus die on the Cross? Had he any intention in His death? According to Bultmann, Jesus is "a concrete figure of history—Jesus of Nazareth. His life is more than a mythological event: it is a human life which ended in the tragedy of Crucifixion. We have here a unique combination of history and myth".[18] For Bultmann, this combination presents only "a number of difficulties", but surely these arise only if we do not recognise the uniqueness of the historical person of Jesus. He was more than a man of Nazareth. He was a son of Israel and entered into what may be called a heritage of myth, in which the Word of God had assumed definite symbols of promise and hope—the Messianic Office, the coming of the Son of Man, the Suffering Servant and the eschatological Kingdom of God. The New Testament represents Jesus as accepting His existence in relation to these myths, but we know from Bultmann's other writings that he regards this identity as apostolic interpretation rather than historical fact.[19] In that case, of course, the death of Jesus was a tragedy—just one more crucifixion of a misunderstood man by the world. But if it be, even

accepting Bultmann's existential categories of interpretation, that Jesus was what the New Testament represents Him to be, one who had true human existence in the sense that He was at-one with God, untroubled by guilt or anxiety, and for whom death meant a victory to be achieved rather than an anticipation of nothingness, then in Him personally the distinction between myth and existence, between symbol and reality had been abolished, and as Dodd maintains, eschatology was realized. Perhaps we should go further and say that in Him eschatology was transformed and Jesus was the Christ. However, such judgment carries us beyond the limits of existential thought and demands the category of transcendence, and so we must say that while Jesus was a unique man in his human existence, in Him there was also Divine existence. But if we omit, as Bultmann appears to do, all reference to historicity except the bare event of the Cross, without reference even to the identity of Him who was crucified, then the Cross itself becomes nothing more than a symbol which could be more easily interpreted as a revelation of human tragedy than a Word of Divine Salvation. The real Divine event is Jesus. It is He who gives meaning to the Cross, but only if He is the Christ of God. It is in the light of His Person that we can understand such "scandalous" events as the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection, which are not to be regarded, as Bultmann maintains, in the category of miraculous "proofs," and therefore to be relegated to the realm of myth.[20] They are elements in the total unique event, at the heart of which stands the Cross. And this is surely the objective ground of our faith i. e. the media through which the Saving Word comes to us.

IV

The value of Professor Bultmann's interpretation of the Atonement ought to be gratefully recognized. We may accept it as more than a protest against objective theories that regard the Work of Christ in the nature of a transaction externally contrived as a corrective measure within the Divine economy of grace. Its positive importance lies in the demand for contemporary relevance. He does face the question that every preacher of the Cross must encounter viz.—how can an event in history become the present Word of God? In what sense can we say that we are saved by the Death of Jesus Christ? Bultmann is surely right in maintaining that unless the Cross becomes an inward experience whereby we respond in faith to the Divine overture, there is no forgiveness of sins. It is questionable whether the portrayal of Calvary as a cosmic drama in which Christ overcame the evil powers of the world by the strange victory of loving surrender to their insurgent attack, is sufficient unless His warfare is recapitulated in us. God the Holy Spirit must speak through the Cross to us now in our contemporary need of redemption, so that Calvary no longer remains in the externality of history but becomes, as Bultmann maintains, an existential apprehension of Divine action. All of this surely indicates the manner in which the Gospel must be proclaimed and should be gladly accepted.

However it is questionable whether we may therefore dispense with what is described as the mythological furniture of the *Kerygma*: rather we must ask whether the message of the Cross can be heard in any other way.

The real issue is the correctness of Bultmann's account of myth. He insists on an anthropological rather than a cosmological interpretation. Is he right? We may fully agree with his contention that primitive myth is not simply a pre-scientific cosmology. All the present-day authorities confirm this judgment. But is the true understanding of myth not theological? Bultmann deals with this point in his "Reply to the Theses of J. Schniewind." He maintains that, as a matter of fact, "I *am* trying to substitute anthropology for theology, for I am interpreting theological affirmations as assertions about human life. What I mean is that the God of the Christian revelation is the answer to the vital questions, the existentialist questions."[21] Here we come to the heart of the whole matter. Is God an answer to questions? Is God not rather He from whom the questions proceed? It is this Divine address to man that is depicted in myth, and as Schniewind maintains, it is difficult to see how this Unseen Presence can be expressed in any other language.[22] This is no mere debating point. Bultmann's entire argument is vitiated when he maintains that the contemporary existentialist thinkers are saying the same thing as the New Testament and saying it quite independently. Are they indeed? The existentialists are speaking from within a world wherein the profoundest questions are addressed by Christ, even if He is not openly acknowledged. And, in any case, surely the source of the despair that is presented to us in the New Testament as the condition to which the Gospel comes as the Word of Life, did not derive from a cosmology but rather from an apprehension of God. It was the Word of the Cross that spoke in Judgment. This was something far profounder, much more deeply disturbing, than the anxiety of the contemporary existential man. The "fallenness" of which the apostolic writers speak is quite different from that of Heidegger—it is a falling away from real existence because it is a self-affirmation against God. True, that same Word of the Cross speaks in our time to man in his disaffection with himself, and the preacher must so present it; but its power does not lie primarily in its capacity to illumine, but rather in its authority to condemn. The guilty conscience that cries out, "What must I do to be saved?" has an objective origin in the sense that the accusation is addressed to us from God. This is the real existential situation portrayed in the New Testament, not a cosmology, not even a theology, but man in the hands of his Creator, Who is His Judge, but Who by His own act of redemptive love, is His Saviour. Call this myth, if you will, but how else can it be stated? And is it as unintelligible to modern man, as Bultmann contends?

Is the language of cosmological myth less acceptable to the modern man than the interpretation of an existentialist philosophy? Or do we need an existentialist interpretation? May it not be that we must exclaim with Sheridan, "Egad, I think the interpreter is the hardest to be understood of the two." If, as Bultmann maintains, we must adjust our thought to an age of science, is it not precisely with cosmological and historical involve-

ment that modern man is most deeply concerned? The strength of the Marxist appeal to the modern mind is derived from its world-view. Its gospel is a summons to become reconciled to an ongoing process that moves with an inherent logic through nature and history, and there can be no peace until our redemption is accomplished by a surrender to its onward drive. Again, call it myth if you will, but who can deny the power of its appeal? What it lacks, of course, is what the Bible supplies—the presence of a Personal God active in the movement of the cosmos and history, not as irresistible force but as spiritual grace. This is the Word of the Cross, and it speaks from within a cosmological and historical frame of reference. If modern man finds himself caught up into a cosmic process, may the Atonement not be fittingly presented as giving man new life and hope, precisely because, as in the New Testament his whole world is being redeemed? We need to replace the myth of a mechanical, soulless universe that has bemused the modern mind, with a nobler picture—the God who becomes Incarnate in a Man. Here myth and history have an authentic place of meeting in the New Testament.

Let the last word rest with Bultmann. Along with Kierkegaard's and Berdyaev's, we may well accept his teaching that the truth of the Gospel is an inward apprehension. Faith is essentially subjective. Revelation is only perceived by an assent that is a decision. The Atonement must be a personal reconciliation to God. Without this, nothing else matters. But it is God who reconciles us. Christ is our Atonement. The Revelation must be received before it can be accepted. Faith is not self-created. The Cross is a historical event before it is an inward experience. The Resurrection is the actual raising up of Christ before it is our new life. In a word, subjectivity flows from objectivity.

Notes

1. *Kerygma and Myth—A Theological Debate* with contributions by Rudolf Bultmann, Ernest Lohmeyer, Julius Schniewind, Friedrich Schumann, Helmut Thielicke and Austin Farrer, edited by Hans Werner Bartsch, translated by Reginald H. Fuller (London: S.P.C.K., 1953).
2. "The idea of atonement is juridical, and when applied to God, mythological: so is the doctrine of satisfaction"; R. Bultmann: *Kerygma and Myth*, p. 109.
3. "What Bultmann and his school are trying to remove, according to Sasse, is not myth but dogma" (dedogmatizing, not demythologizing); ibid. p. ix. 4. Ibid. p. 7.
5. "Or again, one might adopt an analogy from the law courts, and explain the death of Christ as a transaction between God and man through which God's claims on man were satisfied. But that would make sin a juridical matter"; ibid. pp. 7, 8.
6. Ibid. pp. 4, 5, 119. 7. Ibid. p. 3. 8. Ibid. p. 10.
9. *Sein und Zeit* Erste Hälfte (Halle, Niemeyer, 1927). Martin Heidegger, "dass die Zeitlichkeit als exstatische Einheit," p. 365.
10. Op. cit. p. 42, "Das Wesen des Daseins liegt in seiner Existenz," *also passim.*
11. Op. cit. p. 183 et seqq., "Die Angst offenbart im dasein," p. 188.
12. Op. cit. p. 182, "Das sich-vorweg-schon-sein-in-einer Welt."
13. "Verfallenheit"; op. cit. pp. 175, 176.
14. Op. cit. pp. 250 et seqq. "Das Sein zum Tode ist wesenhaft Angst," p. 266.
15. *Kerygma and Myth*, p. 25. 16. Ibid. p. 36.
17. "This mythological interpretation is a hotch-potch of sacrificial and juridical analogies, which have ceased to be tenable for us to-day"; ibid. p. 35.
18. Ibid. p. 34.
19. See e.g. *Theology of the New Testament*: R. Bultmann (E.T.) (S.C.M. London 1952), Chap. I.
20. *Kerygma and Myth*, pp. 11, 39. 21. Op. cit. pp. 107, 108. 22. Op. cit. pp. 47 ff.

Asking Questions of the Canadian Past

JOHN W. GRANT

ANYONE who has attempted to teach the history of the Church in Canada is painfully aware of the limitations of Canadian historiography. The student of English or Scottish Church history has at hand an extensive bibliography, whereas the literature dealing with the Canadian past is scanty and leaves out of its range many important aspects of the subject. Few of the Canadian books are equal in quality to standard histories of European Churches. Most serious of all, the student who comes to Canadian Church history from the investigation of older regions senses at once what can only be called a diminution of scale. He seems to be moving from significant history to a less significant story.

The problem is not limited to ecclesiastical history but affects the writing of secular Canadian history as well. Most books of Canadian history, especially textbooks of Canadian history, fail somehow to engage the mind or to grip the imagination. Fortunately the achievements of writers like Dr. A. R. M. Lower and Dr. Donald G. Creighton give hope for the future.

Most of the defects of Canadian historical writing can be traced to the lack of two important qualities. One of these is a sense of magnitude. We seem to be reading not about world-shaking movements or controversies but about back fence gossip or line fence quarrels. The other is a sense of relevance. We can appreciate much more readily our debt to Magna Carta than our involvement in the affairs of colonial governors or the politics of the Double Shuffle.

But why do we feel this lack of magnitude and relevance? Is it because the incidents of Canadian history are not large enough or important enough to us? To some extent, no doubt, our story leaves us at a disadvantage. None of the great moments of history—with the possible exception of Church union—has occurred in Canada. Likewise the events and movements that have been most influential in shaping our secular and our ecclesiastical history have taken place elsewhere. We should be left with more clues about our heritage if we knew only the history of Europe than if we knew only the history of Canada. Nevertheless, the magnitude and relevance of our story justify better history than we have so far written. Our past has qualities of the heroic that we have not fully exploited. We have been shaped by that past, too, in greater measure than our historians have yet indicated.

Is the problem, then, the immaturity of our scholarship? To some extent, yes. In the field of history, secular as well as religious, we are only beginning to find ourselves. The major problem is not, however, lack of

ability. One senses that competent men are attempting to deal with a mass of material that continues to elude them. Some of our own scholars have done much better work when they have left Canadian history for research in other fields.

Neither refractory material nor incompetent investigators are primarily responsible for the present unsatisfactory state of Canadian historiography. Our real trouble is that we have not made up our minds what to look for. R. G. Collingwood insisted that scientific history is written by putting questions to the past.

> Every step in the argument depends on asking a question. The question is the charge of gas, exploded in the cylinder-head, which is the motive force of every piston-stroke.[1]

In writing the story of the Canadian Church we have not yet reached maturity because we are still casting about for the right questions to ask. The questions that we have asked hitherto have not, except in rare cases, been of sufficient magnitude and relevance. Inevitably, our history has appeared dull and of only secondary importance.

Greater attention to historical technique will help us towards maturity. Collingwood pointed out that the methods of the historian bear a closer resemblance to those of the detective, seeking to draw inferences from clues, than to those of the compiler of a scrapbook, assembling a bulk of material in a more or less orderly fashion. The compiler serves a valuable purpose, bringing together much of the raw material of history. The concern of the real historian, however, is with the solution of problems of human behaviour rather than with the arrangement of archival material. Much that has passed for history in Canada consists of what Collingwood called "scissors and paste" work, work valuable and necessary but still pre-historical. We are at a stage now when we ought to be asking historical questions and solving historical problems.

But what questions shall we ask? The historian is unlimited in the range of the questions that he can put to the past, provided that he asks human questions. Nevertheless, the application of certain criteria to Canadian Church history may lead us to problems that are likely to be productive of interesting and significant solutions.

First, we must seek out problems that are of real weight. A great deal of the history that we have written to date has dealt with such questions as, "Who was the first minister of *x* congregation, and when did he arrive?" Gregg's monumental *History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada* consists largely of such items of ecclesiastical genealogy. We owe a great debt to Gregg and to others like him. Most of the writers of his era dealt honestly with the personalities about whom they wrote and furnished us with information that we could ill afford to be without. Until we ask questions larger than theirs, however, we cannot hope that Canadian Church history will escape the dullness of which it has so often been accused.

Similarly, we must approach problems with serious intent. We are all familiar with the "filial piety" type of book about the past, often authorized by a Church board, rich in inspirational value but without pretensions to historical judgment. It would be idle to condemn these books as history, for their purpose is not historical. There is a danger, however, that in drawing inspiration from the deeds of our ancestors we may fail to do justice to the complexity of their personalities. One has only to compare Mrs. Stephenson's *One Hundred Years of Methodist Missions* with Alexander Sutherland's *Methodism in Canada*, from which much of her information is drawn, to see how the portraits of the pioneers can be retouched and an unreal perfection read into the story. We cannot hope that the past will come alive until we treat our forefathers with the honesty of purpose that we instinctively feel to be due to a Luther or a Calvin.

Secondly, we should be on the look-out for problems that are relevant to the life of the twentieth century Canadian Church. There is, indeed, a danger in using the past to explain the present. The true historian studies past human actions for their own inherent interest, and not only because they throw light on our own situation. In examining historical material with a view to discovering how we have come to be as we are, we are apt to treat our ancestors as if they were important merely because they were our ancestors. This is poor theology, and poor historiography. Nevertheless, the past takes on a new dimension when it is seen to be our past. It becomes excitingly new and contemporary.

Much of Canadian Church history, unfortunately, has not been shown to stand in close relation to us in our situation. Much has been written about the heroism, the piety and even the foolishness of our fathers in the faith, but when we seek out the roots of our traditions we find ourselves confronted with strange gaps in the record. What difficulties we meet, for example, when we seek to learn how our ancestors reacted to situations that still confront us today! We know what rivers they crossed and how many services they held on a Sunday, but what order of service did they use and what did they do when they entered a Sabbath School class? With a few honourable exceptions, our historians have not troubled to tell us about such matters. But what life would be breathed into Canadian Church history by a little elementary information about activities of universal concern!

Thirdly, we should do well to look for problems that can only be solved from Canadian sources or that can best be solved from Canadian sources. The Canadian historian is under no obligation to devote himself to Canadian themes. Anyone who does wish to write Canadian Church history, however, must develop an awareness of the Canadian tradition, especially as it differs from other traditions.

Chief among the pitfalls that await the would-be author of Canadian history is the difficulty of differentiating the fields in which there is a distinctively Canadian approach from those in which we have accepted

our traditions almost ready made. Some studies have proved disappointing because they have only set in a Canadian frame a picture already familiar to us in a British or American setting. Studies of the development of theological or social thought or of changes in practical Church methods generally fall into this class. The fact is that in these fields we have very largely accepted the answers that others have given and that there is in them, therefore, no separate Canadian story. No doubt some such studies must be made, if only to reach negative conclusions, but they are unlikely to unearth results excitingly new.

Another form of this difficulty is the subtle temptation to write into Canadian Church history assumptions derived from the study of other countries. We read a statement about the American Church in a certain period, and assume that it must also be true of the Canadian Church in the corresponding epoch. We are the more easily deceived because the two situations are so alike that we are bound to discover *some* evidence to support our assumptions. Unfortunately we may easily be led to overlook differences that are as striking as the similarities and sometimes even more significant. Few serious writers of Canadian Church history have not at some time succumbed to this danger.

The analogy of the American frontier has been particularly misleading to Canadian writers. American historians have discovered that study of the unique conditions of life on the rural frontier sheds light on many aspects of American Church history. Why not, Canadian historians have rightly reasoned, look for similar influences on Canadian Church life? It is temptingly easy to take another step, and to assume that deductions about American churchmanship made from studies of the American frontier can be applied quite simply to Canada. Some writers have surprised us by succumbing to this fallacy. S. D. Clark's excellent work, *Church and Sect in Canada*, is deprived of some of its value by the author's apparent determination to read out of Canadian evidence conclusions suggested by studies elsewhere. The evidence is there, all right, for the Canadian scene has always exhibited close parallels to the United States, but absorption with piety of the American frontier type seems to have blinded Mr. Clark to specifically Canadian aspects of churchmanship. How else explain the unreliability on broader issues betrayed in this "whopper": "Union of the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregational churches in 1925 was a reflection of the growing dominance of secular values associated with Politics and Big Business"[2]?

Even Dr. Lower, who usually succeeds in writing the Canadian story from within, has succumbed at times to the tempting American analogy. Of the frontier period he writes: "The only denomination that had sprung up on the spot, in answer to the needs of the people, was the Methodist."[3] He cannot mean that Methodism spontaneously appeared on the Canadian frontier, which would be a palpable absurdity. He must mean that it took on a new form on the American frontier, which is something quite differ-

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ent. The fact is that, during the period in which Methodism appeared in force, Upper Canada was little more than an extension of upper New York. The countryside was wide open to American influence, and the itinerant preachers who took advantage of the opportunity thought of themselves simply as Americans. Only when Canada began to take shape did a typically Canadian denominational pattern begin to emerge, and that was not the pattern of the American frontier. Over the long years of Canadian history the denominations that gained most consistently in numbers were the Roman Catholic, the Anglican and the Presbyterian. Despite Dr. Lower, these denominations were all as Canadian as the Methodists.

Despite suggestive analogies with other countries, the Canadian Church has its own story and its own heritage. Recognition of this uniqueness need be inspired by no sentiments of Canadian nationalism. It is, rather, required by historical realism. No one can hope to write good Canadian Church history who has not succeeded in getting inside the Canadian situation and writing about it from within.

The suggested criteria of magnitude, relevance, and relation to what Malcolm Ross has described as "our sense of identity" as Canadians, are not intended to limit the Canadian historian in his search for problems to solve. Their purpose is to suggest to Canadian historical writers certain problems whose solution would furnish worthy themes. Several such problems come readily to mind.

1. *The influence of religious issues on the whole Canadian political tradition.* In a small Nova Scotian town almost all the members of one Presbyterian Church vote Liberal, whereas the majority of the members of the other vote Conservative. To those who know anything of the story of the quarrels of the Antiburghers and the Kirk this correlation of religion and politics will not be surprising, and most politicians could tell you a good deal about it too. From few books on Canadian history, however, would one gather to what extent our political parties have crystallized upon lines of cleavage originally ecclesiastical. No one wishes to reopen old sectarian quarrels, but a dispassionate study of the influence of the Churches upon political life would tell us much about ourselves and would, at the very least, show how impossible it is to understand Canada without knowing something of the religion of her people. Many textbooks of Canadian history have been written in apparent ignorance of this connection.

2. *The closely allied problem of Church and state in Canada.* Since our religion and our politics have so frequently affected each other we Canadians have obviously had to make certain decisions, conscious or unconscious, about the manner in which the two ought to be related. The precise balance has varied so much from province to province that no single answer could possibly be given to the question, "What is the Canadian tradition concerning the relations of Church and state?" Nevertheless, we have a pattern that is not quite like anyone else's. We have no established Church like those found in England or Scotland. On the other hand, our tradition

is not aptly described by the phrase, "the separation of Church and state," so widely used in the United States. After all, what minister (at least outside British Columbia) has not preached regularly in country schoolhouses as a matter not of courtesy but of course? Whatever the opinions of most of us about the relations of Church and state, we regularly assume an intimacy of connection that belies a strict theory of separation.[4] There is a wide field for someone who will sort out our traditions in this area and ask how we came to get them. Such a study will have obvious relevance to the current issue of religion in the public schools.

3. *The development of a Canadian attitude to denominations.* In this field, too, we are not quite like others. We have not inherited the English tradition that there is one Church and all others are dissenters; indeed, Canadians rejected this tradition with some heat. We have not, however, accepted all denominations as equal, sovereign and self-sufficient Churches with the readiness that was formerly normal in the United States. It is difficult to define the difference between Canadian and American attitudes to denominationalism, but one senses it whenever one crosses the border. The difference is well exemplified in the university setting, where Americans naturally gravitate to denominational groups and Canadians to interdenominational fellowships. Canadian impatience with denominational cleavages goes back a long time. Students of Canadian Church history are all aware that unions of related groups in Canada have commonly preceded unions of the same groups elsewhere. But why? This subject suggests questions that might fruitfully be put to the Canadian past.

4. *Distinctive Canadian features in church life.* A keen observer will have no difficulty in detecting in many aspects of our Church life elements that are distinctively Canadian or have a distinctively Canadian flavour. In non-liturgical Churches this is certainly true of worship. The atmosphere of Canadian worship is somehow not that of English or Scottish or American worship. Several students are interested in this line of research now. Other areas offer similar possibilities. The other day, for example, a friend suggested an investigation of the place of theological education in the Canadian Churches. When Thomas McCulloch modelled his seminar on the Log Colleges of American Presbyterianism and on the University of Edinburgh he began an equivocal tradition that is distinctly Canadian, and so familiar that we tend to take it for granted. An analysis of our Canadian churchmanship should suggest many other subjects for research.

The student of Canadian Church history should have no difficulty in finding a subject. We are only beginning to formulate the questions that will enable us to read the secrets of our past. A student who attempts one of the problems suggested here or a similar problem will, however, be confronted immediately with one formidable obstacle. He will find that many of the documents he needs are unavailable, or have been lost, or have been destroyed. To some extent this deficiency is due to carelessness about preserving archival material. To an even greater extent, however, it stems

from a limited view of what archival material includes. We have been moderately good about preserving official Church records and some biographical material. But who has kept sample orders of service, or Sunday School lessons? A broader conception of Church history implies a broader view of Canadian archives.

As we ask the proper questions and carefully seek out the documents that will supply the answers, we may expect the gradual growth of Canadian Church history to maturity. The process will be slow, for only as one question is asked will the next be revealed. Already, however, there are promising signs of an approach to the past that will furnish us not only information about our ancestors but answers that are considerable enough, relevant enough and distinctive enough to make mature and exciting history.

Notes

1. *The Idea of History*, p. 273.
2. P. 431. Capitalization his.
3. *Colony to Nation*, p. 194.
4. "In the United States the Protestant approach is nearly always from the point of view of the separation of church and state. In Canada it is almost always from the point of view of the cooperation of the church and state." *Religious Instruction in the Schools of Canada*, Information Service of National Council of Churches, Oct. 20, 1951.

Catholic Approaches to the Problem of Unity

ABBE LOUIS O'NEILL

Translated by

W. F. BUTCHER

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Father Louis O'Neill is assistant-chaplain in the Faculties of Commerce, Forestry and Surveying, and Science, at Laval University, Quebec, and chaplain to the organisation of Catholic Action in Laval University. This article appeared in the March, 1955, number of *La Revue Eucharistique du Clergé*, published in Montreal. It was written for the Roman Catholic priesthood of the Province of Quebec, with no thought of publication among Protestants. Father O'Neill has seen and approved of this translation and its printing.

A happy change has come about in the past few years in the way of considering the difficulties of bringing together divided bodies of Christians. We have left far behind us the period of the wars of religion and the dragonnades. Doubtless there are still unhappy incidents, and there still exist unjust conditions which throw a shade across the scene, but it seems to us accurate to say that these belong on the whole to a time which has passed. The conflicts which still take place between Catholics and Protestants in certain parts of our country, concerning the school question, for instance, must appear to some of us to be normal. Yet we must not attach to these incidents an exaggerated importance, and so falsify our understanding of the real state of things. We are here disregarding the secular aspects of such questions as nationality and language. These are separate matters.

It is undeniable that the need to unite before the rise of materialist forces, Marxism in particular, has contributed very much to the drawing together of those who call themselves Christians. Once more God brings good out of evil. It is this growing danger which obliges believers to set aside many resentments and long-held prejudices in order to consider the situation with new eyes, with a true desire for objectivity.

It is important to remark that we are putting ourselves on the plane of life, not on the doctrinal level, where no compromise is possible. Loyalty towards our faith protects us against the type of pan-Christianity denounced by Pius XI.[1] Moreover, it would be a poor service to our Protestant friends if we gave them the impression that we are ready to compromise on principles. But . . . that does not mean that we have to content ourselves with a gracious attitude, simply waiting until the heretics come to us and confess their errors. Such a position does not consider the fulness of the problem and the urgency of more effective solutions.

The fighting approach, while having a certain positive value, is, in our

opinion, not only out-of-date, but even sometimes harmful. It is inconceivable that a discussion should still be based more or less slavishly on patterns inspired by John of St. Thomas. For doctrine, yes. There this great theologian can render immense services. The long chapters on the First Debate and the Treatise on the Sovereign Pontiff keep their whole value.[2] But it is otherwise with the psychological attitude adopted and the vocabulary used. Many educators do not hesitate nowadays to question the traditional methods of apologetic teaching, and that even in our own circles, so far hardly reputed to be revolutionary. We think this is a sign of the times. It seems to have been found that the mind of modern man, while thirsty for the same truths, wishes them to be presented in a context which takes heed of present needs and of the circumstances of our own time.

A fruitful approach, to help those who wish to understand our beliefs, is that of such centres of information as the Inquiry Forum.[3] It meets the needs of non-Catholic individuals, no matter to what group they belong. It serves as a point of reference always at the disposal of one who is being touched by a special grace of conversion. It is insufficient, but it would not be fitting to undervalue the immense services which it is now rendering.

With the friendly approach, such as Brotherhood Week, and other movements of the type, we meet a rather new method. People with differing beliefs meet with the idea of knowing and understanding one another better, and trying as much as possible to break down the barriers which separate them, especially the psychological ones. In certain movements, approaches are readily made to religious subjects, such as the different methods of prayer in each of the groups, or again the systems used in the religious education of children. Exchanges are made between members of different religious bodies. The official neutrality of social clubs is avoided. There is rather the principle of a sort of pluralism which guides the procedure of the whole.

This last attitude seems to us to show some progress, on the condition that the Catholic participants are very well prepared for such meetings, which is far from always being the case. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that it is difficult enough to avoid merely social and superficial encounters. Where it has been tried, however, this approach has made it possible to enter into more profound and serious relationships, continued under other circumstances.

At a level higher than the foregoing are to be placed efforts of the type of the European ecumenical movements, such as those in which Father Congar has taken an active part. One could name also Fathers Dumont, Hamer, and so on. In this approach, as in the former one, it is not, we would dare to say, a matter of converting one another, but of drawing nearer together. A movement of convergence is attempted by an honest effort to grasp the positions of the others, as they themselves understand them. Those taking part try to speak the same language so as to distinguish real differences from verbal ones. The aim is to prepare the ways of the

Spirit for Him who makes unity, their intelligences having been better disposed to receive His influence.

It would be incorrect to say that Catholics have not on their side to make an effort, under the pretext that they already possess the truth. Such a position seems to us too optimistic. There is a distinction between having received the truth and truly possessing it, and similarly, between possessing it and living it. Each of us must "obey the truth in order to come to the light". The infallible faith of the Church does not make up for one's own. One can believe exactly according to the words and be among those who will not have faith when the Son of Man shall return to the earth. The faith which I have received I must win. I must discover it vitally. And in this effort to win it, and in the self-examination which such an effort implies, I shall discover perhaps that this and that point of doctrine to which I adhere correctly according to the wording expresses itself in part in individual notions or attitudes of life that do something to falsify the picture and are an obstacle to the true faith for those who wish to draw near to us. That is why the work of research and of understanding faces the Catholic too. The approach toward unity implies a bilateral movement. Thus we must go over again, one by one, certain points of doctrine where we differ in opinion. In this way we show a sincere devotion to the truth, which is one. Indeed Protestants are surprised at the lack of intellectual research which marks many Catholic, and even ecclesiastical, circles. What do we mean then, they ask, by devotion to truth? Or, again, we have a high notion of human freedom; that is why we refuse certain Protestant positions concerning a too absolutist idea of predestination. Yet our way of expressing freedom, for example in the case of totalitarian Christian political structures, is a phenomenon which baffles them. The first, they say, who gave great importance to human freedom is none other than Christ. To take a further example, we assert against them the high spiritual meaning of sensible signs, and yet cases are not rare of marked sliding in Catholic countries towards a ritualism which repels them, sometimes with good reason. For in many cases the repugnance shown is often enough legitimate, and in their eyes is based on truth. We could multiply examples to show that we must not hastily deduce that we express in our lives that which we possess on the plane of principle. We cannot here refuse self-examination.

Such relationships presuppose respect for the belief of the other man, and confidence in his sincerity. They require also such love for the truth that one will not hesitate to recognise it wherever it is found, even if partial or disfigured. All truth belongs to us. We must remember the warning of St. Augustine: "Men would never attach themselves to an erroneous doctrine if a fragment of truth were not there." Besides, as Father Mersch notes, "Truth and error are not separated by an intermediate zone which is neither one nor the other, and which it would not be wise to visit. They touch, on the contrary, all along the line: truth goes as far as error, quite as far as error, shutting it out: to stop too soon, should this be to withdraw

before error, would be to fall into error, would be saying falsely that which is still true."[4]

Traditional apologetics has not sufficiently accustomed us to consider from this angle the relationships of Christians. Among ourselves, a negative position has easily predominated because of the parallel political and racial attitudes which have reinforced it. Thus we have brought about the sociological phenomenon of the fortress-Church, the Catholic preserve, rich in the traditional Christian values, but so closely tied to its ethnic context that it is hindered at present, or so it seems, from its mission of outreach.

The ecumenical approach which we will call modern, if the word can be used without mistrust, is perfectly justified both theologically and historically. Carried out according to the rules set by the Church,[5] it must attract us. The Catholic more than any other, precisely because he believes that he possesses the essentials of the Revelation and not only parts of its gifts, must engage confidently in such activity. He possesses the principles which assure him of light and guide him in the way. Further, he must have confidence in the Holy Spirit. Sometimes one has the impression that some Catholics mistrust the Holy Spirit, above all when He seems to suggest new things!

Such work doubtless requires discretion, humility—and study! These contacts are a rare stimulant to make any priest recover the desire to be a theologian, if he has lost it. The example of intellectual enquiry and of the spirit of toil shown by some ministers could easily serve as a lesson for us. This comfort in the possession of the truth which moves us to dispense with study and with the need of rethinking is dangerous. Let us beware of it. The Lord perhaps prefers anguished seeking to mildewed possession. "He who is no longer worried, is in danger", said Newman. When, with tense spirit and anxious eyes, three kings from the Orient left Jerusalem and turned their steps toward Bethlehem, a passer-by might have laughed a little at their distress and had pity on men who gave themselves such trouble. Nevertheless it was this anxiety which enabled them to find Him who is Peace.

Notes

1. Encyclical *Mortalium Animos*, 6 January, 1928.
2. The two treatises are presented together in the excellent edition Gagné-Mathieu, Quebec, 1947. (Presses Universitaires Laval).
3. *The Inquiry Forum*, a centre of information and instruction for future converts, has been organized at Montreal under the direction of the Rev. Father Beaubien, S.J.
4. E. Mersch, S.J.: *La théologie du Corps Mystique*, Vol. I, p. 93. (Ed. 1944)
5. See *Instructions of the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office concerning the Ecumenical Movement*, 20 December, 1949.

Rethinking Missions - 1955

EDWARD H. JOHNSON

SINCE the close of World War II it has become increasingly clear that the great movement of worldwide Christian outreach known as "the modern missionary movement" has arrived at a point of major transition. The missionary dynamic of earlier generations which issued in a movement of growing strength and momentum is missing from many sections of the church. The vision expressed in the famous watchword of the Student Volunteer Movement "the evangelization of the world in this generation", which called forth a magnificent outpouring of men and money, seems to stir little response except questions as to its validity. Many of the traditions and working patterns of the established institution of "missions" which have been powerful in their time appear awkward and ineffective now.

Those who are engaged in the work of missions are aware that much of the missionary energy of this generation is used in meeting the steady demands of a missionary institution inherited from the past. They see that our missionary program in its motivation is, to a large extent, the expression of the missionary faith of an earlier generation, and in its patterns is a product hammered out at an earlier and very different stage in the development of both the Church and the nations.

The rank and file of ministers and lay people in our local congregations who have been passive in their missionary obligation are beginning to ask questions. They have misgivings about the missionary enterprise as they conceive it but at the same time are becoming conscious in a new way of their missionary responsibility, and wonder how the Church should play its rightful role in the life of these times. They are being stirred by new developments in theological thinking about the missionary and eschatological nature of the Church, and there are important beginnings in the task of rethinking the Church's mission in practical terms.

The need for a radical rethinking is partly a matter of theology. It is not too great a simplification to say that the missionary movement of the past century sprang from two main approaches. First, there were those who went out to "save souls." They saw the heathen as passing over the brink of death into everlasting damnation and they saw their task as that of plucking brands from the burning. To do this they preached what they called 'the simple gospel' of salvation of souls for the life beyond. For life in this world they had only a kind of moralism focussed on a limited realm of personal conduct and often framed in negative terms. When they carried on a ministry of teaching it was chiefly in order to prepare more preachers, and when they built up a ministry of healing it was partly out of compassion for suffering persons, but mainly as a means of contacting men in order to

save their souls. They had little interest in the social order or in general economic problems and indeed were suspicious of the Christian integrity of those who, as Christians, concerned themselves with such things.

Second, there were those who went out with a Christian humanitarian concern. Jesus was one who had a great compassion for men and women in their present need and his disciples should follow his example and go forth in His spirit to minister to the needy. These people tried to see below the troubles of individuals to the social and economic factors which caused them. They were impatient with talk about saving souls which seemed to ignore present suffering. They established some of the great missionary universities and some of the best hospitals in many parts of the world, and pioneered in agriculture and rural reconstruction and social work. But they had a vagueness at the point of the Christian approach to non-Christian religions, and the task to which they called men of good will seemed utterly beyond men's strength to accomplish.

When one examines these two very different approaches one discovers that they both had a very serious lack at the same place. Neither of them had a theology of the Lordship of Christ over the whole of life. The one had power and standards of conduct for men in a limited realm of individual concerns but left him on his own in the wider social and racial and international relationships in which he was involved. It had no good news about Christ the wisdom of God for all of life. The other had a guide for men in his wider relationships but left him to struggle in the midst of massive problems with only his own limited strength. It had no good news of Christ the power of God at work saving the world.

The violent world events of recent years, and the rise of totalitarian philosophies, and particularly the rise of communism have made the Church aware that there were whole areas of life to which it was speaking no word. It has sensed that its work has often been on the periphery of events and that history has passed it by. It has too often been guilty of being an 'historic absentee'.

The need for radical rethinking of the missionary task is partly also a matter of practice and method. We are caught with the patterns of the past when a new day is upon us. We find our missionaries living in massive houses in beautiful spacious compounds in a day when we believe in simpler living. We find ourselves caught with expensive institutions in a day when we talk of new mobility. We missionaries have a strong habit of being in control in a day when we talk of taking a second place to the leaders of the indigenous Church. We are still using in 1955 approaches that were valid in 1900.

But God has not called us to serve the missionary task of the peaceful and optimistic world of 1900, nor of the pre-World War II epoch of 1938, nor yet of the period of reconstruction and hope of 1946, but of the confused and unpredictable world of 1955. Dr. Max Warren, Secretary of the

Church Missionary Society in Britain, has stated that the missionary tradition of the 19th century is one of the greatest hindrances to our fulfilling the missionary task today. We know we should move forward, but its powerful habits of thought still shape our planning and action. We are in the position of the Australian aborigine who was presented with a new boomerang and went mad trying to throw away his old one.

The first and most obvious reason for a changed missionary approach is the changed world. The earlier missionary went out in a world which was safe, stable, and predictable. There were minor disturbances but these were within the overall and growing security of the Pax Britannica. Brief periods of unrest were only temporary setbacks in a sure and steady progress of civilization conceived in European terms. One could see that we were moving forward to world peace and prosperity.

Within this kind of setting a missionary program was developed which was marked by its great institutions and long-term plans. Large schemes could be devised in the confidence that they could be brought to fruition in the coming decades. In this era the great schools and universities and hospitals of the missionary world were built.

Today we go out in a world which is everywhere unstable, dangerous and totally unpredictable. Few lands in all the world are at ease either domestically or in their international relations. The danger spots from which a world conflagration might arise are too numerous to list and the nature of the threat, with hydrogen and cobalt bombs in stock, and intercontinental ballistic missiles in the making, is beyond imagination to grasp. What may happen in any part of the world is not within our power to predict. Yesterday it was war in Korea, then in Indo-China, now it is a threat in the Formosan Straits. Where will it be to-morrow?

This is a time of severe testing and correction for the Church everywhere and perhaps the greatest problem is uncertainty. We cannot tell what may happen to-morrow to the work we are doing today. The missionary who prepares for work in one land may find that when he is prepared the doors are closed and he has to be diverted to work in some country for which he has no special preparation.

Missionary practice has already made some radical changes, but far more important than any changes are the developments in recent years in international missionary thinking. The Madras conference of the International Missionary Council in 1938 may be looked on as marking the end of a former era in world missions. It gathered together in masterly fashion the best thinking of former days, and its seven volumes of report still constitute the best authority in matters of missionary policy and procedure as developed across more than a century.

When the International Missionary Council had its next meeting in Whitby in 1947, meeting as the first international Christian gathering after World War II it said little about missionary method, and laid its great em-

phasis on the fact of the worldwide community of Christians under the phrase "partners in obedience." It met in a spirit of hope, with war behind and the prospect of peace and harmony ahead.

When the International Missionary Council convened another conference in Willingen, Germany, in 1952, it met in an entirely different mood, convinced that the most difficult days of the Church lie ahead. Its great concern was to examine the meaning of the Church's mission at the deepest theological level. At this point it refused to issue a statement.

It was of very great significance that the Willingen meeting refused to give easy answers to basic theological questions and closed without a definite finding. It has thrown back to the whole Church the task of seeking anew the leading of the Spirit. For too long our approach to missions has been promotional, the selling to the Church public of an understood and accepted enterprise. Now we need to re-examine what we are doing in Biblical terms. We are already discovering that the basic questions of the missionary movement are not the problems of missionary procedure but rather the problems of the whole of the Church in its total mission.

Let me suggest three of the questions we must work at as we seek to rethink the Church's mission:

1. *What is God saying to us in the revolutionary world situation? Can we discern a redemptive activity of God in these secular events in relation to which we can understand more clearly the redemptive activity of God through the Church?*

In recent trips to the Caribbean and to Asia, and in an earlier trip around the world I was forcibly struck not only by the turmoil and danger of our time but by the fact that this condition prevails almost everywhere at the same moment. I saw many aspects of revolution—economic, social, political and international in Japan, China, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaya, India, Pakistan and in the nations of the Middle East. Many of these peoples have had to live for decades under war and the threat of war. In most of these lands there are vast communities of refugees and displaced persons. Governments have been destroyed and new governments hold a somewhat uncertain authority. Domestic and international tensions abound. The whole picture appears as a vast confusion and chaos. Can we discern any meaning or promise in it?

In terms of the missionary institution of the past these are days of closing doors. Most of China is now closed to missions from the outside world. In India there is a growing resistance to foreign missionaries. It has been announced that even missionaries from Commonwealth countries will require special visas; and missionaries leaving India and wishing to return will need "No-objection-to-return" certificates. Many other countries are beginning to raise sharper questions. The doors which have been open for almost a century are closing.

At the same time there is increasing missionary activity on the part of non-Christian faiths. All across the world the apostles of Communism are active. Two years ago when I visited India I had not been in the country 48 hours before I was approached on a rural bus by a bright little Indian lad trying to sell me a nicely printed, well-bound "Life of Joseph Stalin" in English. Moslem missionary activity is on the increase. The rulers of three great Moslem states, Pakistan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia recently announced their intention of launching a missionary campaign to make Africa Moslem. On a smaller scale I have discovered more vigorous Moslem activity among the East Indians of British Guiana where Canadian missionaries are at work. Since India became independent there has been a revival of Hindu missionary activity. This too has extended to the East Indians of British Guiana. At the present time the Buddhists are holding their Sixth International Congress, a two year meeting, to clarify Buddhist thinking and prepare for a campaign for world Buddhism. Recently in Formosa I saw signs of more vigorous Buddist activity.

For a hundred years the Christian missionary movement had the world almost to itself but that day has definitely passed and now we can only regret that we did not take fuller advantage of that open opportunity. Yet, if we believe that God is Lord and that He is at work in His redemptive activity, we must surely believe that doors are open if we have the wit to discern them. In terms of the institution of the past doors may be closing, but in terms of the task to be done this may be a time of new doors opened wider than ever before. Let me give one illustration of a great new door for the missionary enterprise.

In a visit to the Middle East I saw the excellent missionary work being carried on in two of the five stations of the Arabian mission stretched a thousand miles along the northern border of Arabia. I was impressed by the quality of the missionaries and the work of this mission, which has numbered among its leaders some of the great names of American missions. Sixty years ago Samuel Zwemer and John Cantine who established this mission went to Arabia with the aim of preaching the gospel in Mecca. But being forbidden to do so they began as near Mecca as they could. In all these years the mission has had only a few converts from the Moslem faith to Christianity. At the time of my visit the missionaries were rejoicing because they had been able to establish another station in a desert oasis inland some miles nearer to Mecca, but they still had many miles and a great deal of hard resistance before Mecca would open to Christian preaching.

When I returned to New York I was telling this story to a Presbyterian layman who is an engineer in the foreign department of one of the big radio companies, and he commented, "I am most interested to hear this, for at this moment I have a Moslem from Mecca working in my office. He is spending several weeks studying broadcasting equipment and will go

back to set up a station in Mecca." It is still impossible to take the gospel to Mecca but the man from Mecca is brought to the gospel and put alongside a Christian layman. Are we alert to the new opportunity to proclaim the gospel to those who have lived behind fast-closed doors in the large numbers of overseas students and technical men who have come among us? We must learn how to discover and use these and other missionary opportunities of our time.

Surely we can believe that there is a door of opportunity for the Christian mission in the new situation of the Chinese Christian community thrown on its own and forced to re-examine its faith in the context of Communism. What a tremendous new opportunity there is in the revolutionary events which have led many peoples out of ancient patterns of ignorance and oppression and need and opened the way for a different day. There is a marvellous new hope in the freedom and new-found confidence of the non-white nations. It was a very great day for mankind when the Asian and African nations gathered together in Bandung on their own initiative and stood as free and independent nations after a century in which they all had suffered humiliation and foreign control. There is a wide new door of opportunity for the gospel in the hunger for a word all across the world, a hunger which is particularly intense in the newly independent nations seeking the true meaning of national life. We need a deep sensitivity to discern the hand of God in the events of our time and to be at the places where He is working.

2. *What does the ecumenical character of the Church mean for the Christian mission?*

The old missionary pattern saw its base in Europe and America but now the missionary base is the world-wide Church and every land is a mission land. We must take full advantage of this great new fact and bring the whole Church around the world into a missionary activity which looks to the ends of the earth and the fulfilment of history as its task. In the former pattern there was always the danger that the missionary task might become so intertwined with the cultural and political expansion of western civilization that the gospel would be lost within something known as Christianity. It was not always clear whether the missionary base was the church or the product of the church known as Christendom. Now that the missionary base is in a church located in the midst of many different cultures it should be easier to clarify the word of the gospel.

In the new pattern we will see the movement of missionaries not only from Europe and America to other lands but more and more from these lands to Europe and America. Already some of the finest evangelistic work among students and intellectual groups in the West has been done by Christians from Asia and Africa. We will see also the interchange of missionaries in many directions, in terms of the fitness for particular tasks. One of the

most effective student workers in Indonesia was a young Christian from India. Christians from India serve with good effect in Africa and Papua. Missionaries from Brazil are at work in Portugal. And so the chain should continue criss-crossing the world.

As we explore the full meaning of the universal church in its mission we should remember that the Church is not only a consequence of the gospel, and an instrument for the proclamation of the gospel, but is also a part of the gospel. It is the body of Christ, indwelt by the Holy Spirit. As it has become a world-wide community and is in fact what it has always been in the intention of God it should be possible to proclaim the gospel with a clarity and power such as there have never been before.

The world-wide character of the Church also demands a rethinking of the missionary responsibility of every Christian. No longer will it be possible to have a missionary enterprise going forth from a Church which, in its own character, is non-missionary, or to work alongside a Church which is non-missionary. The Church in each land, and other Christians in each land as well as the sent missionaries must have a common missionary concern if the gospel is to be proclaimed in truth and power. Surely this calls for a deep new understanding of the missionary dimension of the vocation of every layman.

These are only a few of the many lines along which the new fact of the universal Church opens up whole areas of new depth and power in the Christian mission.

3. *What does the Lordship of Christ over all of life mean for Christian missions?*

No longer can we proclaim a Gospel which is largely concerned with the saving of men's souls for we know that it is a cosmic salvation we must proclaim. No longer can we give ourselves to a social gospel dependent on men's strength, for we proclaim a God who is at work in judgment and mercy in all the affairs of men. The good news must give men assurance about their ultimate hope and guidance about their immediate personal problems, but more than that it must tell them who they are and what they are doing. Everywhere across the world these are the basic human questions to which the Christian message speaks.

Our doctrine of redemption has to be related to our doctrine of creation. The God who saves us is the God who is Lord of all things. A China missionary reported that the Communists were not much concerned when missionaries preached the saving of souls, but they were deeply disturbed when they preached the doctrine of creation for this hit at their basic tenet of the autonomy of the material world.

We Christians have tended to be partly Buddhist and partly Marxist in our view of things. On the one hand we have spiritualized our religion and said that religion was above things like money and have been like the

Buddhist who sees salvation in escape from the material world. On the other hand we have said business is business, let the Church keep out of politics, and have almost granted an autonomy to these material and practical aspects of life and in this we have been Marxist. It is time that we rediscovered a New Testament view of the world as created by God and controlled by Him and the field of His salvation.

Men need to know who they are. Are they just autonomous individuals with no obligations beyond getting the best for themselves? Are they only members of a family, or tribe, or clan, or race with no responsibilities beyond those of their own group? Are they simply part of the human race which finds its meaning only within itself? Before I can know how to act I need to know who I am. And to this question the word of God replies "You are mine and I have sent my Son to call you back to the humanity from which you strayed."

Men need to know what is happening. How can I live with purpose and confidence and joy unless I have some understanding of what is going on beneath and through the perplexing and seemingly catastrophic events of these times? Is everything senseless and without direction? Are we heading for certain disaster? Or is there a deep and sure purpose beneath apparent confusion? To these questions the Word of God replies, "All human history shall be consummated in Christ—everything that exists in heaven or earth shall find its perfection and fulfilment in Him."

Such an understanding would surely save us from the kind of approach which seems to suggest that the end of Christian effort is the increase of Church activities. Perhaps it would lead us to see the instrumental character of the Church as a community called to serve God's redemptive purpose for all human history. It would help to provide an understanding of the vocation of the Church in relation to human events which would give a solid and broad base to understand the vocation of the individual in every area of lay life.

It could relate the preaching of the Gospel to the cry which arises from the nations across the world "Do you have a word from God which speaks to our need?" A word concerned with religious matters and Church activities is not the word for which the world waits nor is it the good news of the New Testament. But a word which calls men to discover their true humanity, and their right relation to God, and their place and meaning in history and in the plan of the universe—this would indeed be good news for a world which waits.

"What is Truth?"*

PAUL TILLICH

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; . . . For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ [John 1:14, 17].

Why do you not understand what I say? . . . you are of your father the devil. . . . He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies [John 8:43, 44].

Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king, For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears my voice." Pilate said to him, "What is truth?" [John 18:37, 38].

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" [John 14:6].

He who does what is true, comes to the light. [John 3:21].

And I will pray the Father, and he will give you . . . the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you [John 14:16, 17].

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth [John 16:13].

Let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God; for God is love [I John 4:7, 8].

Jesus then said to the Jews who had believed in Him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" [John 8:31, 32].

IN the above passages there are words in which Jesus speaks about truth. Another of these words shall be the center of our meditation, the word in which He combines truth and freedom: "The truth will make you free."

The question of truth is universally human; but like everything human it was first manifest on a special place in a special group. It was the Greek mind in which the passionate search for truth was most conspicuous; and it was the Greek world in which, and to which, the Gospel of John was written. The words, here said by Jesus, are, according to ancient custom, put into His mouth by the evangelist who wanted to show the answer of Christianity to the central question of the Hellenic mind: the question of truth. The answer is given also to us, for we, too, ask the question of truth. And some of us ask it as passionately, and sometimes as desperately, as the Greeks did.

It is often at an early age that we are moved by the desire for truth.

*In advance of the publication of Paul Tillich's new volume of sermons, *The New Being*, we received permission to print this sermon in the *Journal*. We are grateful to Dr. Tillich & Messrs. Scribners, the publishers, and are glad to call our readers' attention to the book which has now appeared.

When I, myself, as a fifteen-year-old boy received the words of our text as the motto for my future life from the confirming minister, who happened to be my father, I felt that this was just what I was looking for; and I remember that I was not alone in my group with this longing for truth. But I also observed, in myself and in others, that the early passion for truth is due to be lost in the adolescent and adult years of our lives. How does this happen?

The truth the child first receives is imposed upon him by adults, predominantly by his parents. This cannot be otherwise; and he cannot help accepting it. The passion for truth is silenced by answers which have the weight of undisputed authority, be it that of the mother or the father, or an older friend, or a gang, or the representatives of a social pattern. But sooner or later the child revolts against the truth given to him. He denies the authorities either all together, or one in the name of the other. He uses the teachers against the parents, the gang against the teachers, a friend against the gang, society against the friend.

This revolt is as unavoidable as was his early dependence on authority. The authorities gave him something to live on, the revolt makes him responsible for the truth he accepts or rejects.

But whether in obedience or in revolt, the time comes when a new way to truth is opened to us, especially to those in academic surroundings: The way of scholarly work. Eagerly we take it. It seems so safe, so successful, so independent of both authority and willfulness. It liberates from prejudices and superstitions; it makes us humble and honest. Where else, besides in scholarly work, should we look for truth? There are many in our period, young and old, primitive and sophisticated, practical and scientific, who accept this answer without hesitation. For them scholarly truth is truth altogether. Poetry may give beauty, but it certainly does not give truth. Ethics may help us to a good life, but it cannot help us to truth. Religion may produce deep emotions, but it should not claim to have truth. Only science gives us truth. It gives us new insights into the way nature works, into the texture of human history, into the hidden things of the human mind. It gives a feeling of joy, inferior to no other joy. He who has experienced this transition from darkness, or dimness, to the sharp light of knowledge will always praise scientific truth and understanding and say with some great medieval theologians, that the principles through which we know our world are the eternal divine light in our souls. And yet, when we ask those who have finished their studies in our colleges and universities whether they have found there a truth which is relevant to their lives they will answer with hesitation. Some will say that they have lost what they had of relevant truth; others will say that they don't care for such a truth because life goes on from day to day without it. Others will tell you of a person, a book, an event outside their studies which gave them the feeling of a truth that matters. But they all will agree that it is not the scholarly work which can give truth relevant for our life.

Where else, then, can we get it? "Nowhere," Pilate answers in his talk with Jesus. "What is truth?" he asks, expressing in these three words his own and his contemporaries' despair of truth, expressing also the despair of truth in millions of our contemporaries in schools and studios, in business and professions. In all of us, open or hidden, admitted or repressed, the despair of truth is a permanent threat. We are children of our period as Pilate was. Both are periods of disintegration, of a world-wide loss of values and meanings. Nobody can separate himself completely from this reality, and nobody should even try. Let me do something unusual from a Christian standpoint, namely, to express praise of Pilate—not the unjust judge, but the cynic and sceptic; and of all those amongst us in whom Pilate's question is alive. For in the depth of every serious doubt and every despair of truth, the passion for truth is still at work. Don't give in too quickly to those who want to alleviate your anxiety about truth. Don't be seduced into a truth which is not really your truth, even if the seducer is your church, or your party, or your parental tradition. Go with Pilate, if you cannot go with Jesus, but go in seriousness with him!

Twofold are the temptations to evade the burden of asking for the truth that matters. The one is the way of those who claim to have the truth and the other is the way of those who do not care for the truth. The first ones are called "the Jews" in our gospel. They point to their tradition which goes back to Abraham. Abraham is their father; so they have all truth, and do not need to be worried by the question which they encounter in Jesus. Many among us, Christians and secularists, are "Jews" in the sense of the Fourth Gospel. They point to *their* tradition which goes back to the Church Fathers, or to the popes, or to the Reformers, or to the makers of the American Constitution. Their church or their nation is their mother, so they have all truth and do not need to worry about the question of truth. Would Jesus tell them, perhaps, what He told the Jews—that even if the church or the nation is their mother, they carry with them the heritage of the father of untruth; that the truth they have is not the truth which makes free? Certainly there is no freedom where there is self-complacency about the truth of one's own beliefs. There is no freedom where there is ignorant and fanatical rejection of foreign ideas and ways of life. There is not freedom but demonic bondage where one's own truth is called the ultimate truth. For this is an attempt to be like God, an attempt which is made in the name of God.

There is the second way of avoiding the question of truth—the way of not caring for it, of indifference. It is the way of the majority of the people today, as well as at the time of Jesus. Life, they say to themselves, is a mixture of truth, half-truth and falsehood. It is quite possible to live with this mixture, to muddle through most of the difficulties of life without asking the question of a truth that matters ultimately. There may be boundary situations, a tragic event, a deep spiritual fall, death. But as long as they are far removed, the question of truth can also stay far away. Hence, the

common attitude—a little bit of Pilate's scepticism, especially in things which it is not dangerous today to doubt, as, for instance, God and the Christ; and a little bit of the Jew's dogmatism, especially in things which one is requested to accept today, as, for instance, an economic or political way of life. In other words, some scepticism and some dogmatism, and a shrewd method of balancing them liberate one from the burden of asking the question of ultimate truth.

But those of us who dare to face the question of truth may listen to what the Fourth Gospel says about it. The first thing which strikes us is that the truth of which Jesus speaks is not a doctrine but a reality, namely, He Himself: "I *am* the truth." This is a profound transformation of the ordinary meaning of truth. For us, statements are true or false; people may *have* truth or not; but how can they *be* truth, even *the* truth? The truth of which the Fourth Gospel speaks is a true reality—that reality which does not deceive us if we accept it and live with it. If Jesus says, "I am the truth," He indicates that in Him the true, the genuine, the ultimate reality is present; or, in other words, that God is present, unveiled, undistorted, in His infinite depth, in His unapproachable mystery. Jesus is not the truth because His teachings are true. But His teachings are true because they express the truth which He Himself is. He is more than His words. And He is more than any word said about Him. The truth which makes us free is neither the teaching of Jesus nor the teaching about Jesus. Those who have called the teaching of Jesus "the truth" have subjected the people to a servitude under the law. And most people like to live under a law. They want to be told what to think and what not to think. And they accept Jesus as the infallible teacher and giver of a new law. But even the words of Jesus, if taken as a law, are not the truth which makes us free. And they should not be used as such by our scholars and preachers and religious teachers. They should not be used as a collection of infallible prescriptions for life and thought. They *point* to the truth, but they are not a law of truth. Nor are the doctrines about Him the truth that liberates. I say this to you as somebody who all his life has worked for a true expression of the truth which is the Christ. But the more one works, the more one realizes that our expressions, including everything we have learned from our teachers and from the teaching of the Church in all generations, is not the truth that makes us free. The Church very early forgot the word of our Gospel that He *is* the truth; and claimed that her doctrines about Him are the truth. But these doctrines, however necessary and good they were, proved to be not the truth that liberates. Soon they became tools of suppression, of servitude under authorities; they became means to prevent the honest search for truth—weapons to split the souls of people between loyalty to the Church and sincerity to truth. And in this way they gave deadly weapons to those who attacked the Church and its doctrines in the name of truth. Not everybody feels this conflict. There are masses of people who feel safe under doctrinal laws. They are safe, but it is the safety

of him who has not yet found his spiritual freedom, who has not yet found his true self. It is the dignity and the danger of Protestantism that it exposes its adherents to the insecurity of asking the question of truth for themselves and that it throws them into the freedom and responsibility of personal decisions, of the right to choose between the ways of the sceptics, and those who are orthodox, of the indifferent masses, and Him who *is* the truth that liberates. For this is the greatness of Protestantism: that it points beyond the teachings of Jesus and beyond the doctrines of the Church to the being of Him whose being is the truth.

How do we reach this truth? "By doing it," is the answer of the Fourth Gospel. This does not mean being obedient to the commandments, accepting them and fulfilling them. Doing the truth means living out of the reality which is *He* who is the truth, making His being the being of ourselves and of our world. And again, we ask, "How can this happen?" "By remaining in Him" is the answer of the Fourth Gospel, i.e., by participating in His being. "Abide in me and I in you," He says. The truth which liberates is the truth in which we participate, which is a part of us and we a part of it. True discipleship is participation. If the real, the ultimate, the divine reality which is His being becomes our being we are in the truth that matters.

And a third time we ask, "How can this happen?" There is an answer to this question in our Gospel which may deeply shock us: "Every one who is of the truth hears my voice." Being "of the truth" means, coming from the true, the ultimate reality, being determined in one's being by the divine ground of all being, by that reality which is present in the Christ. If we have part in it, we recognize it wherever it appears; we recognize it as it appears in its fullness in the Christ. But, some may ask in despair: "If we have *no* part in it, if we are *not* of the truth, are we then forever excluded from it? Must we accept a life without truth, a life in error and meaninglessness? Who tells me that *I* am of the truth, that *I* have a chance to reach it?" Nobody can tell you; but there is one criterion: If you *seriously* ask the question, "Am I of the truth?" you *are* of the truth. If you do not ask it seriously, you do not really want, and you do not deserve, and you cannot get, an answer! He who asks seriously the question of the truth that liberates, is already on his way to liberation. He may still be in the bondage of dogmatic self-assurance but he has begun to be free from it. He may still be in the bondage of cynical despair, but he has already started to emerge from it. He may still be in the bondage of unconcern about the truth that matters, but his unconcern is already shaken. These all are of the truth and on their road to the truth.

On this road you will meet the liberating truth in many forms except in one form: you never will meet it in the form of propositions which you can learn or write down and take home. But you may encounter it in one sentence of a book or of a conversation or of a lecture, or even of a sermon. This sentence is not the truth, but it may open you up for the truth and it

may liberate you from the bondage to opinions and prejudices and conventions. Suddenly, true reality appears like the brightness of lightening in a formerly dark place. Or, slowly true reality appears like a landscape when the fog becomes thinner and thinner and finally disappears. New darknesses, new fogs will fall upon you; but you have experienced, at least once, the truth and the freedom given by the truth. Or you may be grasped by the truth in an encounter with a piece of nature—its beauty and its transitoriness; or in an encounter with a human being in friendship and estrangement, in love, in difference and hate; or in an encounter with yourself in a sudden insight into the hidden strivings of your soul, in disgust and even hatred of yourself, in reconciliation with and acceptance of yourself. In these encounters you may meet the true reality—the truth which liberates from illusions and false authorities, from enslaving anxieties, desires and hostilities, from a wrong self-rejection and a wrong self-affirmation.

And it may even happen that you are grasped by the picture and power of Him who is truth. There is no law that this must happen. Many at all times and in all places have encountered the true reality which is in Him without knowing His name—as He Himself said. They were of the truth and they recognized the truth, although they had never seen Him who is the truth. And those who have seen Him, the Christians in all generations, have no guarantee that they participate in the truth which He is. Maybe they were not of the truth. Those, however, who are of the truth and who have encountered Him who is the truth have one precious thing beyond the others: They have the point from which to judge all truth they encounter anywhere. They look at a life which never lost the communion with the divine ground of all life, and they look at a life which never lost the union of love with all beings.

And this leads to the last word which the man who has written the Gospel and the Letters of John has to say about truth: that the truth which liberates is the power of love, for God is love. The father of the lie binds us to himself by binding us to ourselves—or to that in us which is not our true self. Love liberates from the father of the lie because it liberates us from our false self to our true self—to that self which is grounded in true reality. Therefore, distrust every claim for truth where you do not see truth united with love; and be certain that you are of the truth and that the truth has taken hold of you only when love has taken hold of you and has started to make you free from yourselves.

Book Reviews

Revelation and Religion: Studies in the Theological Interpretation of Religious Types. By H. H. Farmer. London: Nisbet & Co. Ltd. 1954. Pp. x, 244.

Ever since Karl Barth and Emil Brunner initiated their campaign against Schleiermacher, there has been in much modern theology an obvious reluctance to seek any kind of real affinity between the Christian experience of God and the non-Christian religions. The concern for the uniqueness of the acts of the transcendent God in the Heilsgeschichte of the biblical record has often seemed to lead to a complete evasion of the challenge presented by the very existence of great religions outside the Hebrew-Christian tradition. The Gifford lectures of Dr. Farmer are, therefore, especially welcome in their resolute attempt to defend the uniqueness of Christianity and to relate it in a living way to the universal manifestations of the religious consciousness. Those who are familiar with his earlier works will know how central is the category of personality in his elucidation of the relationship between God and man. This emphasis is continued in these lectures with freshness and originality.

In view of the revived interest in natural theology and the works of men like E. L. Mascall and Austin Farrer, not to mention the massive contribution to philosophical theology of F. R. Tennant, it is welcome to find Dr. Farmer insisting on the distinction between natural theology and natural religion. He claims that the former "can only make progress towards its desired haven when it allows its sails to be filled in part by the wind of natural religion" (p. 13). He does not despise or rule out of court the reasoned arguments of natural theology in the strict traditional sense, but he does strongly contend that the religious response to the transcendent personal God is sui generis. It is not generated primarily by metaphysical speculation, even if the latter may sometimes appeal to those deeper levels of the mind which call into activity our religious response (p. 15). Religion, to quote John Baillie, has its roots in the human soul and is a universal phenomenon. How, then, are we to classify the great mass of religious data which man's history affords? What is the essence of the religious response, and what is merely accidental, conditioned by particular psychological or sociological factors? What, also, is the relation of Christianity to the religious life of mankind in general? Is there a normative concept of religion by which it can be classified and satisfactorily interpreted? In grappling with these problems, Dr. Farmer starts from two basic assumptions. First, religion arises where ultimate reality touches the spirit of man and discloses itself as personal (p. 28). Second, he is quite frank in admitting that he is aiming to present a Christian philosophy which

assumes the finality of the Christian relevation". A Christian theism must be a theism of incarnation and of reconciliation; one might say that it must be a frankly christological and soteriological theism" (p. 18). This, however, must not be interpreted as simply another bare assertion of the superiority of the Christian religion on a take it or leave it basis. The author seeks to show that if Christianity be taken as the normative concept of religion in the sense that there God discloses Himself to man as personal in the fullest and most adequate way, this will throw a flood of light upon all man's religious activities and enable us to make better sense of the religious quest than on any other assumption.

The reader must judge for himself whether this is so when he has read Dr. Farmer's illuminating analysis of the various types of religious worship and behaviour. This reviewer at least is persuaded that in this book the thesis is successfully sustained with great skill and carries conviction. If Dr. Farmer has succeeded in this task, then it is possible to assert both the genuine uniqueness of Christianity as the religion of the Incarnation and at the same time to admit that God has personally approached and encountered man in the other religions. The knowledge of God thus made known may be incomplete, fragmentary, distorted and sometimes perhaps perverted, but it is real and the Christian is not called upon to deny it in order to defend the uniqueness of Christianity.

It is not possible in a brief review to give the many illuminating illustrations which the author has taken from every phase of the religious life. Suffice it to mention briefly the seven elements which Dr. Farmer selects in his attempt to define the normative concept of religion as defined by Christian worship. These are the apprehension of God as ontologically other, as axiologically other, as personal, as asking all, as giving all, as intimately present and active within the worshipper's own being, together with a feeling tone, pervading the whole awareness, akin to awe but really sui generis and which "can only be described as the feeling-tone which accompanies or is appropriate to, the living encounter with God" (pp. 78–9).

Perhaps it should be said in conclusion that no review can do justice to the freshness with which Dr. Farmer handles problems which have been and are matters of keen debate. This is an eminently readable book. It is also a notable contribution which should go a long way towards overcoming the tensions between metaphysics and living religion and between Christianity and the non-Christian religions in a synthesis which does justice to all the facts, and above all to the Christian's conviction that God (in Christ) has acted decisively and once for all for us men and for our salvation.

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The Pattern of Christian Truth. By H. E. W. Turner. London: Mowbrays (Toronto: Ryerson Press), 1954. Pp. xvi, 508, $8.40.

This is one of the most erudite volumes produced in over a century and a half under the aegis of England's most distinguished theological lecture foundation. Published with remarkable speed, it contains the Bampton Lectures of 1954, together with a good deal of supplementary material; author and publishers alike should be congratulated on producing such a large and complex volume so promptly and accurately. The book is a masterpiece of reliable reporting and judicious comment in the field of patristic studies, applying as it does the important work done in this area from Harnack and Loofs onward to the elucidation of its theme, which is defined in its subtitle as "A Study in the Relations between Orthodoxy and Heresy in the Early Church". It must be admitted that this mass of material is not brought completely under control, so that at certain points the reader may find his way out of the trees with difficulty, but there are few problems that a second reading will not solve, and on the whole the essential argument is clear and well-presented.

Professor Turner's aim is nothing less than the formulation of a viable alternative to the ruling dogma of modern scholarship in this field. The latter has tended to regard as axiomatic a radical change in the character of early Christianity, with the "spiritual" Church supposedly reflected in the Pauline Epistles, etc., as the starting-point, and the hierarchical Church of second-century Catholicism as the product. It has attributed this change in large measure to the exigencies of the struggle with heresy, and has defined it variously—sometimes as a milder form of the drastic transformation essayed by the early heresies, sometimes as a one-sided canonization of certain strains of early Christian thought, to the exclusion of other equally authentic (or equally unauthentic) elements, now stigmatized as heretical. Professor Turner, however, writes: "As against the theory that orthodoxy was indebted to any considerable extent to the heresies with which she was confronted, I have set out and tried to establish the principle of the autonomy of orthodoxy, the steady growth towards maturity of the life and thought of the Church, no doubt accelerated to some extent by the necessity of dealing with new menaces from within as well as from without, but primarily and essentially related to her own domestic concerns and interests" (p. x).

Turner recognizes that the ancient orthodox theory, which he describes as the "classical" view of heresy, cannot simply be revived, without consideration of the facts that underlie modern hypotheses. The great defect of the "classical" view was its lack of a sense of historical development, which led its exponents to assume the existence of an orthodoxy as sharply defined as their own in the formative years of the Church's life. Turner suggests, however, that we must not miss the truth that there was genuine and meaningful continuity between the primitive faith and cultus and

later orthodoxy. He brings his historical learning to bear most effectively on this point, when he illustrates the defects, in terms of the most fundamental Christian principles, of "heresy as dilution" (such as Gnosticism), "heresy as truncation" (Marcionism), "heresy as distortion" (Montanism), "heresy as archaism" (Monarchianism, etc.), and "heresy as evacuation" (Arianism).

The core of Professor Turner's argument is a survey of the use made by heresy and orthodoxy respectively of three fundamental sources of theology —Scripture, Tradition and reason. He has little difficulty in showing that orthodoxy makes a more coherent and comprehensive use of these sources, while heresy tends to be highly selective in its treatment of Scripture, fails to meet the test of Tradition, and frequently reveals a distressing superficiality in its use of philosophical material. He is particularly skilful in his criticism of the theory that the ideas of biblical canonicity and of a traditional "rule of faith", or Creed, were an afterthought, stimulated by the example of heretical groups, and in his presentation of the contrary view, to the effect that the New Testament Canon, the Creed and the doctrine of Apostolic Succession—on which, because of the scope of his work, he touches more lightly—were all natural developments from earlier Christian faith and worship. Only the most determined defenders of the hypothesis of a primitive formless, traditionless Christianity will dare to sustain that thesis without radical modification, once they have weighed Turner's evidence and argumentation.

If I were to offer a criticism of the main line of argument, it would have to do with Professor Turner's treatment of Tradition. Taken simply as a defence of the continuity of the teaching of the "Great Church" with the Church's historical origins, as represented in the New Testament, it is sound and valuable. It fails, however, to deal seriously enough with the challenge of modern studies of Tradition to simple assertions of the primacy of Scripture. Here, as nowhere else in these lectures, he seems too anxious to save the "literal sense" of the Anglican formularies. Thus for him Tradition is almost entirely "secondary"—something that takes over when Scripture leaves off. There is little recognition, on the other hand, of the extra-biblical elements of the *primary* Tradition, for example, of the development, parallel to Scripture, of the *kerygma* as a *regula fidei* or "key to the Scriptures." In particular, his central thesis would have gained (at least in its expression) from the consideration of the phenomenon, noted by the late Dom Gregory Dix in *The Shape of the Liturgy*, of the early emergence and continuous use in the Church of a pattern of the eucharistic action which differs conspicuously from the biblical paradigms. Without affecting the principle of the doctrinal priority of Scripture, such consideration would have made it clearer that Scripture is given to the Church, not by itself, but in the setting of a comprehensive Tradition of faith and order, which looks to Scripture for the terms of its interpretation, but is not simply dependent on the New Testament texts. Moreover, if

Professor Turner, instead of speaking in apparently subjectivist terms of the "devotional" outlook of primitive Christianity, had paid more attention to the objective norms of the total *paradosis* as the basis of later developments, his whole case would have been strengthened.

As for details, one might question his too ready dismissal of Jungian interpretations of myth as a clue to the understanding of the dynamics of Gnosticism (p. 114); his phrase, "The Augustinian equation of the kingdom of God with the Church" (p. 131), which is fair neither to Augustine nor to the support for the "equation," such as it is, in earlier and even weightier sources; or his tendency to minimize the less happy elements of the Platonic contribution to Christian theology (p. 225). At the same time, one should note Turner's sound and often brilliant comments on a number of important theological and historical issues, such as the contemporary craze for eschatology as a substitute for ontology (pp. 31–35); the significance of Ignatius' doctrine of episcopacy (pp. 60–65); the parallel between Gnostic and Montanist "illuminism" (p. 101); the contrast between the Gnostic "attempt to capture Christianity for Hellenic culture" and the patristic effort to capture "Hellenic culture for Christianity" (pp. 103f.); the relation of the *homoousion*, of the "two natures" Christology and of eucharistic "metabolism" to Gnostic ideas (pp. 104–108); the distinctive character of Christian theism over against Neo-Platonism and Gnosticism (p. 115); the character of Marcionism (pp. 117–24); the defects of "modalist" interpretations of the Trinity (p. 138); the teaching of Paul of Samosata (pp. 138–41). These analyses alone would mark this volume as an important contribution to the history of early Christian thought.

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This Most Famous Stream. By ARTHUR R. M. LOWER. Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1954. Pp. xii, 193. $3.50.

THIS latest work by the Douglas Professor of Canadian History at Queen's reveals those great powers of compression and synthesis which we have come to expect from this distinguished Canadian historian. Attempting within two hundred pages to lay bare the essential socio-political traditions of the English-speaking peoples, his book includes: essays on the nature of liberalism and its relation to Christianity; a brief canter into medieval constitutional and ecclesiastical history; chapters on the Tudors; the Church of England and the role of Calvinism in the growth of modern liberty and popular sovereignty; and finally, an analysis of American and Canadian contributions to the growth of the liberal democratic way of life. Written with pithy comment and wit, marred to some degree by a fondness for the homiletical, Lower's achievement is all

the more remarkable for the fact that the writing of history in this generation has been chiefly on the level of criticism. Few scholars are writing history as such: the reconstruction on a broad scale of those events and movements which have influenced human destiny. Lower has attempted courageously the larger canvas. To his courage and skill, the award of the Governor General's medal is adequate tribute.

Considered as a work of history, however, Lower's book is uneven in treatment. His sketch of the evolution of English political institutions leans perhaps too heavily on Stubbs. The account of the medieval Church's struggle for its *libertas* is adequate, although Lower shows little understanding of the motives behind the struggle. His remarks on medieval individualism are even less happy. If the chapter on the Tudors is one of his best, the chapter on the influence of Calvinism is one of his weakest, an uncritical direct line being drawn between Calvin, Calvinism, and modern capitalist society. In discussing the appearance of equalitarian notions in the eighteenth century, we might wish for a clearer indication of the influence exerted by the French Enlightenment, especially with regard to the American constitution. The concluding chapters on Canadian and American history are most satisfactory, particularly his brilliant commentary on Turner's celebrated essay on the role of the frontier in American history.

Uneasiness with Lower's reconstruction arises not so much from the unevenness of treatment, or from the slips to which attempts at popular writing may lead (William the Conqueror is compared to the Nazis, p. 39, and Henry VIII to Mussolini, p. 65), but rather to the fact that Lower believes that the liberal democratic society is the outcome of the "logical processes of history". We cannot but feel that much material has been cut to fit this pattern of historical interpretation, with the result that history is clearly working on the liberal democratic side. And when we are informed (p. 177), that the typical figure of our western civilisation is Republican, Puritan, Protestant, native and white, we find it easier to understand why Lower says so little about the contributions made to the growth of liberal democracy by the French Enlightenment. It may be suggested that Lower is guilty of the same tribalism which in other places he denounces as so typically English. It is doubtful if history is on anyone's side, even the side of a society, liberal and democratic, Protestant and English.

Lower as historian is only a thin disguise for Lower as philosopher and theologian. *This Most Famous Stream* is avowedly a statement of faith, cast in the form of a historical survey. It is clearly a tract for our times, whose purpose is to rescue us from Communism without and confusion within, by laying bare the spiritual core of our civilisation. This spiritual core Lower discovers to be liberalism: that body of belief, reason and usage which reinforces man's faith in himself and strengthens the conviction that actions he calls "right" are in harmony with the eternal scheme

of things (which we may or may not call God). Not only this, liberalism is described (p. 24) as a highly self-conscious and sophisticated stage of Christianity and the liberal society as a Christian society in modern dress (p. 5). What then is Christianity? The theological elements of the Faith, from Virgin Birth to Resurrection, are reduced to "mystical" and are therefore expendable. What remains Lower calls humility, love, the Golden Rule and the dignity of man as the child of God. If this book is disquieting for the historian, how much more for the theologian! For when Professor Lower indicates to us, in his closing pages, that liberalism, his version of Christianity, combined with self-interest, form the genius of our society, we are made painfully aware, not only of the confusions in Lower's own mind, but also of the spiritual sickness of our civilisation.

This reviewer finds it lamentable that one of the best minds in this country has created a book that is more theological than historical, more ideological than either. Yet more than this, his book is alarming for its uncritical optimism—there is little about the danger of totalitarian democracy present in some parts of the English-speaking world—and, above all, for its naive *hubris*, the liberal faith in man, a disease which produced not only the Communism which Lower so greatly fears but which may ultimately spell our own ruin as well.

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No Graven Images. By Charles W. Leslie. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1954. Pp. x, 88. $1.50.

To what extent are the Ten Commandments authoritative for Christians? Missionaries report that in their instruction of new converts they find that sometimes the Old Testament seems more relevant to primitive peoples than the New Testament. At any rate it speaks to their situation and provides, with its specific injunctions, a valuable, if not necessary, interim-ethic before the full liberty of the Gospel can be appropriated. In the early Church Paul found that the influx of converts from paganism created many problems. Among the problems was the significant one of the ethical consequences of the new faith. Evidently a considerable number of the Gentile converts anticipated Augustine's "love God and do what you like," but in a non-Augustinian fashion! Quite clearly the early Church, particularly at Corinth, was not beyond the necessity of being instructed in the value of the Ten Commandments. But what of modern Christians born in lands with a long heritage of Christian influence? Have they not got beyond the moralism of the Ten Commandments and entered into the responsible freedom of the new commandment of Christ? "A new commandmant I give unto you, that ye love one another."

Dr. Leslie, strangely enough, does not quote that great saying of our

Lord, but his book *No Graven Images* is an able effort to look at the Ten Commandments in the light of the new commandment. It is not so much a book on the Ten Commandments as a book on the application of the Christian principle of love to the areas of life with which the Ten Commandments deal. It consists of seven sermon essays, with a Preface and Introduction. The sermons were originally given during Lent, 1952, in Howard Park United Church, Toronto, and are here presented as delivered, excepting the fourth one, which has been enlarged. The sermons must have made a real demand on the congregation's attention. They consist of very highly condensed material.

The author makes no attempt to deal with the Ten Commandments in order. The chapter headings and subject matter are as follows. 1. Injustice and Greed (8th. commandment). 2. Negligence and Contempt (6th. and 9th. commandments). 3. Irreverence and Secularism (4th. commandment). 4. Infidelity and Lust (7th. commandment). 5. Insolence and Pride (5th. commandment). 6. Idolatry and Materialism (1st., 2nd. and 10th. commandments). 7. Insincerity and Hypocrisy (3rd. commandment). The arrangement, as can be seen, is purely arbitrary and no indication is given as to why this order has been followed. Nor in the text itself can one discover any principle of unity or movement requiring such an ordering. Moreover, in the chapter on "Negligence and Contempt" it is not made explicit why commandments six and nine should be combined. It is also unfortunate that no scriptural index is provided.

Nevertheless, this is a book which deals with real and vital issues. Such themes as politics, the State, nationalism, family, marriage and divorce, economics and materialism, are all touched on and illuminated. Dr. Leslie draws a valid distinction between "crime" and "sin" and applies it to the areas of life mentioned and shows how uneasy a truly Christian conscience ought to be regarding its decisions in these areas. "A crime is a transgression, violation or trespass of a legally defined code of behaviour; a sin is a violation of the absolute rights of another person or of God Himself. A crime is the breaking of the established public order; a sin is the destruction of some personal value" (p. 3). Using this distinction between crime and sin Dr. Leslie probes deeply, especially into the sins which are not crimes. Stealing is a crime and a sin, but how much greater is the sin of social injustice! Murder is a crime and a sin, but how much greater is the sin, not only of modern war, but also of hatred. Adultery is a sin and may bring legal consequences but how much greater is the sin of spiritual and psychological infidelity involved in marriages which are only such in name.

It is the chapter dealing with marriage—"Infidelity and Lust"—which probably will raise most comment. Dr. Leslie himself must have anticipated this, as this is the only chapter in which the original sermon has been expanded. He emphasises the point that marriage is made for man, and not man for marriage, and analyses some of the difficulties in the way of

people finding within marriage a means to a full and abundant life. Within the Old Testament, it is noted, society was patriarchal; the husband and father was the head of the household. It was a system which gave unity and stability to the family. Dr. Leslie does not advocate a return to this system, but there are indications that he does not regard it as completely iniquitous. His comments on "career" wives are remarkably outspoken. The weakness of the chapter is that it relates the malaise of modern marriage mainly to sex factors. One would like to have seen the author deal with the problem on a larger scale. The issues raised by divorce are not even touched on. Moreover, the treatment of the New Testament teaching on the subject is most inadequate. Thus, Dr. Leslie quotes Jesus in the Matthean version on divorce, "except for fornication", and seems to have no awareness that the Marcan version of denial of divorce for any reason probably reports the original saying of Jesus. The consequence is that Dr. Leslie does not touch on the vital matter as to whether Jesus' sayings on marriage and divorce are statements of a binding law or the uplifting of an ideal. But what Dr. Leslie has to say in this chapter he says with boldness and candour.

Indeed the whole impression this book conveys is one of honesty. The author has thought through the various issues involved and has reported his conclusions without dissemblance. It is not inappropriate that the final chapter is on "Insincerity and Hypocrisy," and that the essence of this chapter is contained in "even before the law we are all sinners: clearly when we stand before the Cross we can make no claim to righteousness" (p. 87). This is a book which probes deeply into the motives, unconscious drives, and failures in love of us all. In one way it is an uncomfortable book to read, a fact which makes it well worth reading.

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The Seekers. By William Alva Gifford. Montreal: Beacon Press, 1954. Pp. 306. $4.50.

From the preface this would appear a challenging book. It was written that those untrained in theology might discern the character of Christian dogmas and the way in which the Church has come to her present position. The author claims that the advance of scientific and philosophical knowledge has left historic or orthodox Christianity obsolete. The Church assumes that her dogmas have supernatural sanctions and are therefore superior to the insights achieved through observation and meditation. The supernatural, however, is merely the uncomprehended part of the natural order and the insights of the philosopher, scientist and mystic have greater validity than the dogmas of the Church. Because its dogmas are sheer

pretensions historic Christianity is inadequate for these critical times; the hope of the future lies with individuals who will cast off its restraints and through intellectual and spiritual freedom recover true religion (pp. ix). This true religion is a combination of nature-mysticism and Christian ethics (p. 299).

Men have always been seekers after security through reconciliation with the Ultimate Being and through this search a number of religions and philosophical systems have evolved in addition to the Hebrew and Christian (pp. 11–79). Originally the religion of the Hebrews had been that of Arabia. Through a profound religious experience, Moses became conscious of a power in the universe that was supreme over men and circumstances (p. 93). This he identified with Yahweh the storm-god of the Midianites to whom he pledged his devotion and that of his people. A concomitant but even more important insight was that Yahweh's will was moral, demanding obedience to a way of life fundamentally concerned with the relationship of man to God and man to man (p. 84).

Christianity's superiority over the other religions of the world is found principally in its central Figure (pp. 102–21). This Jesus of Nazareth left to mankind certain limited teachings concerning the kingdom of God, and a Gospel proclaiming what God had done and would do for men. At some period in His life, Jesus realized that He was the Messiah (Son of Man) through whom God would establish this kingdom, and he went to his death in the confidence that God would either prevent it or annul it. As to the meaning of His death, a clue is found in the principle of conduct Jesus laid down for members of the kingdom: that the man who lost his life would find it and the life of others, for he wins others to a cause by suffering for it. "What good men will die for, other men will one day acknowledge and adopt" (p. 110). His faith was vindicated, for his followers found the tomb empty and subsequent experiences lead them to believe that He was still alive. The kingdom, however, was not established, and as the second advent grew remote, the Christian faith found its basis in the mystical presence of Christ (p. 120).

The history of the Church is outlined by the author in pages 122–125. The first centuries were characterized by confusion and diversity in thought and practice. The worship of the Church was influenced by the mystery cults, its theology dominated by Greek philosophy, its members divided by internal heretical factions. Of necessity uniformity became a major interest of the Church: a selection of religious literature was designated as sacred scripture; the Gospel was elaborated into Christian theology; and the religious communities were incorporated into one Catholic Church under the supremacy of the Pope. The Reformation brought some changes, but even Protestantism retained the ancient creeds and accepted the scripture as the infallible Word of God—the last of the Catholic infallibilities (p. 228).

The twentieth century opened ominously for the Church: the nations

of the world were yet unchristianized; the Church was confronted by hostile, unscrupulous philosophies. The course which the Roman Catholic Church would follow had been made clear by the Council of Trent; under the Papal authority she would maintain her cohesion; from the hand of the Pope she would receive her guidance (p. 257). The Pope has continued to exercise authority even beyond the limits imposed by Trent, but the faithful accept his dogmas as matters of faith and conscience. Protestantism faced additional difficulties, the fruit of biblical scholarship. The authority of the Bible in matters of faith and conduct had been seriously questioned, even the New Testament was no longer a reliable guide to the life and teachings of Jesus (p. 269). The incarnation remained the central enigma and was not solved by the teachings of the Church Fathers, for these had all the limitations of time and place (p. 270). The supposed singularity of Christianity was further questioned through a study of comparative religion, for here were found spirits kindred to Christ, and concepts of a Deity similar to those of the Christian. Yet the Church worries not, so long as some useful activities are maintained in the community. However, the thoughtful leave the Church; the conservative retire to Fundamentalism. In all this no help can be expected from Neo-orthodoxy for it perpetrates the most fundamental of all errors: it denies the immanence of God, the moral competence of man, and asserts the uniqueness of the Christian revelation (pp. 273 ff).

This book contains an outline of the history of the Church and the rise of modern philosophical thought. As the author notes, large parts of the central section are quotations from his larger work, *The Story of the Faith*. It is impossible to follow the author's system of quotation, however, as all sections quoted are not so indicated, for example, paragraphs on pp. 141, 164, 165, *et al.*

This book raises many issues, none of which is new and few of which can be discussed in this review. Its viewpoint is one which will find little sympathy among theological scholars today, for the author displays a complete indifference to the achievements of contemporary biblical and theological scholarship. His misunderstanding of Hebraic religion, for instance, can do nothing but sow confusion in the minds of the untrained. The author fails to appreciate the distinctive character of Hebrew religion with its emphasis, even in the earliest documents of the Old Testament, on the universal supremacy of the God of Israel, whose redemptive acts are the subject of the Old Testament, and who chose Israel as the people through whom he would effect His Purpose in history. To describe Yahweh as the storm-god of the Midianites, the prophets as religious geniuses rather than enunciators of the Divine Will, and Israel as a people who have chosen a god, rather than a people chosen by God and bound to Him by a covenant, is to describe a religion which bears no resemblance to that of the Hebrews as we find it in the Old Testament.

Gifford is equally unsound in his treatment of the New Testament. His

portrayal of the death of Jesus as that of a martyr is a completely inadequate interpretation of this central event in redemptive history. He correctly refers to Jesus as exhibiting the spiritual energy and illumination of the New Age (p. 118), but the sense of the dynamic invasion of the universe by the power of the Spirit of God is vitiated by the suggestion that those healed of diseases were such as would find relief in the calm victorious spirit of Jesus (p. 105). It is disquieting to read a chapter purporting to examine the gospel and teaching of Christ in which there is no awareness of the judgment of God on sin, and in which the proclamation of God's forgiving love is not considered integral to the advent of the New Age.

In the book's concluding sentence, Gifford, quoting Herbert Butterfield, commends the principle, "Hold to Christ, and for the rest be totally uncommitted." But what he has failed to discern, is that this was precisely a paramount concern of the Church during those early centuries in which he accused her of acquiring an agglomeration of insupportable principles and pretensions. As Cullman has pointed out, Christ was the subject of the first Christian confession: "Jesus is Lord". Thus from the beginning the Church laid hands upon Jesus of Nazareth crucified, risen, now exalted to the right hand of the Father. As the nascent faith made its way into the world of the Gentiles, men raised searching questions concerning this Christ, and the attempted answers gave rise to the great Christological controversies. The struggle to hold to Christ continued during the Protestant Reformation, in which the paraphernalia of medieval ecclesiasticism was swept away. Today the struggle continues, and in recent decades has given rise to a large volume of vigorous theological writing of which Gifford says next to nothing, dismissing it in less than two pages.

Is historic Christianity passing away? The thoughtful will not be convinced on the basis of the generalities which constitute this book. Gifford claims that the intellectual foundations of Roman Catholicism are passing away (p. 265), but merely surmises that many thoughtful Roman Catholics no longer follow the Church in the details of her teaching (p. 267). As for Protestantism, he portrays an ordinand beginning his ministry with a Bible which he cannot consider the Sacred Word, with creeds which have no greater validity than any literary production, and baffled, as men have always been baffled, by the Incarnation. We don't know of what generation of ordinands Gifford speaks—it is not of this. The preface was challenging, but the book will not help the untrained to understand, either what the Church ought to be, or what it is now. Few will deny that the church has amassed a variorum of ideas many of which could be discarded without serious loss. But beneath these is a *theologia perennis* the loss of which would change the essential character of Christianity. The reader cannot but get the impression that the author has never peered into the stygian darkness of the abyss of sin, nor encountered the demonic, satanic evil from which the Son of God rescues His people.

It is difficult to understand the action of a publisher in issuing a book which, apart from the fact that the major part of it was published by another firm, contains such a hopelessly out-moded religious viewpoint.

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Signs and Symbols in Christian Art. By GEORGE W. FERGUSON. New York: Oxford University Press, 1954. Pp. 346, 16 plates in full colour, 96 pages of black and white plates, 250 marginal drawings. $10.

THIS lavishly produced volume is bound to delight lovers of art as well as those who are specifically interested in the sign-language of the Christian religion. As this reviewer can claim no specialized knowledge in either of these fields, his remarks are necessarily limited to a description of the book, together with some pertinent observations on matters where it is more closely related to his own fields of study.

The Christian, whether cleric or layman, who wishes to understand more fully the expression of his religion in art, as well as anyone interested in art who wishes to understand what has been expressed, will find this book a useful guide for reference. Thus the scope of the book is wider than the signs and symbols themselves. It contains much information about the topics of Christian art, biblical, doctrinal, historical, or legendary. Accordingly chapters are devoted to the Old Testament, St. John the Baptist, the Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ, The Trinity, the Madonna and the Angels, and the Saints. The inclusion of chapters on religious dress and religious objects makes this book a useful introduction to Christian culture for the art-lover, as well as supplying those within the Christian tradition much information about obscurer points.

As for signs and symbols proper, they are well classified. Separate chapters are devoted to symbols from animal nature, from flora, from inanimate nature, as well as from the human body, together with more abstract symbols and artifacts. All these are generally exhaustively and satisfactorily treated, with numerous vignettes in the text.

This does not mean that there are no errors and blemishes. On p. 270 the monogram IHS or IHC is explained without adequate reference to the Greek original. The Greek uncials might well have been given with an adequate transliteration. On the following page the author might well have spared himself the egregious error of stating that "Nika is the Greek word for *conqueror*" instead of *conquers*.

In other sections there are similar minor blemishes. In dealing with biblical persons and later saints, the distinction between historical fact and legend might have been made clearer to readers who approach this book

with a less than adequate knowledge of the Bible. In the section on religious dress the description of the surplice on p. 287 is not accurate, and is even curiously at variance with its depiction on plate XIII and plate 88.

Some may regret that the author has confined his illustrations to the art of the Renaissance, instead of going back to that of some earlier period, where the inspiration is more characteristically Christian. However, this may be defended on the practical ground that Renaissance art is more easily available for reproduction on this continent, beside the fact that the average person more easily understands the art of this period than the more austere and less naturalistic forms of Romanesque, Byzantine, and Gothic art. In the matter of symbolism, too, the Renaissance artists generally were content to draw on the existing treasury of symbols, rather than innovate, so that in this respect there is no serious loss.

Some attempt could have been made to correlate the plates more closely with the matter of the various chapters. Besides, an index of the plates as such would be a valuable addition to the existing index. It is to be hoped that a future revision of this splendid volume will make good these deficiencies, which in no way detract from its general excellence.

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